



MISSISSIPPI MUSEUM *of* ART  
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**MISSISSIPPI MUSEUM OF ART ANNOUNCES  
ARTISTS FOR 2009  
MISSISSIPPI INVITATIONAL EXHIBITION**

*August 1 through November 29, 2009*

(Jackson, Miss.)...The Mississippi Museum of Art (MMA) is pleased to announce the ten artists selected for inclusion in the 2009 “Mississippi Invitational” biennial exhibition. The artists, all residents of Mississippi, are Duncan Baird, Cleveland; Brent Fogt, Jackson; Marita Gootee, Starkville; Philip R. Jackson, Oxford; David Lambert, Jackson; Annabelle Meacham, Senatobia; Christopher Miner, Jackson; Mathew Grant Puckett, Jackson; Lee Renninger, Gulfport; and Amanda Sparks, Jackson.

Initiated in 1997, the “Mississippi Invitational” surveys recent developments by contemporary visual artists living and working across the state, and includes work in diverse mediums. The 2009 exhibition marks the seventh installation, and is on view from August 1 through November 29, 2009.

This year’s process began with a call to artists from the Museum for sample images of artwork along with the artists’ statements. More than 100 submissions were considered by guest curator Peter Plagens, a nationally-recognized curator and art critic residing in New York City. Plagens identified fifteen applicants for in-person studio visits and, after five days of statewide travel, narrowed that number to the final ten.

Plagens commented about the selected artists as ranging from “real professional” to “charming amateurs.” He further discussed that all the artists had great passion behind their work. One enlightening moment for him was after a studio visit with artist David Lambert. “I did have preconceived notions that he would be older and self taught;

instead he was a young urban sophisticate. I was educated and humbled by the experience,” Plagens said.

According to MMA Deputy Director for Programs Dan Piersol, Plagens engaged the artists in intensive discussions about their aesthetics, methodology, and influences in their art. Piersol says, “This year’s show includes a number of artists whose work has never been seen at the Museum before, and whose art ranges from the familiar tradition of oil painting to the evolving video media. The glue that holds this wonderful exhibition together is its very diversity, and that alone demonstrates the vigor of contemporary art in Mississippi.”

In addition to exhibiting in the “Mississippi Invitational” exhibition, all ten artists are eligible to apply for The Jane Crater Hiatt Artist Fellowship. The fellowship was created in 2005 by Jane and Wood Hiatt in response to the need to nurture and invigorate the arts. A grant of up to \$15,000 is awarded to one of the ten exhibiting artists who may use it for study with an individual artist or in a studio, workshop, or residency setting; to pursue projects which further artistic development and support the realization of specific creative ideas; to purchase supplies and equipment; to conduct research; and to travel. The artist is then required to donate one original work of art to the Museum from at least five works created during the two-year grant period.

According to Jane Hiatt, “The idea for this fellowship grew from my years of listening to artists and learning what a difference mid-career travel and study can make in an artist’s vision, skill, and scope. Wood and I want to foster that. And we want to enhance the Mississippi Museum of Art’s relationship with artists living in the state.” The Hiatts also sponsor the exhibition and accompanying catalogue through the Hiatt-Ingram Fund of the Community Foundation of Greater Jackson/Jane and Wood Hiatt.

The Mississippi Museum of Art and its programs are sponsored in part by the city of Jackson and the Jackson Convention & Visitors Bureau. Support is also provided in part by funding from the Mississippi Arts Commission, a state agency, and in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

For more information about the “Mississippi Invitational” exhibition, contact Dan Piersol at 601-960-1515 or email [dpiersol@msmuseumart.org](mailto:dpiersol@msmuseumart.org). For the Museum’s hours

of operation, admission prices, and to book tours, call 601-960-1515 or 1-866-VIEW  
ART, or visit the web at [www.msmuseumart.org](http://www.msmuseumart.org).

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