MIAD inaugurates annual exhibition program on “Culture in Transition”
Three-part, 2006 exhibition series explores “Diaspora and the Search for Resolution”

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Contact: Mark Lawson, Director of Galleries, 414-847-3350, mlawson@miad.edu
Vivian M. Rothschild, Communications Director, 414-847-3239, vrothsch@miad.edu

Summary: “Culture in Transition,” a new, ongoing annual exhibition program, will explore the diverse aspects of our rapidly changing global culture. Its inaugural program for 2006 — “Diaspora and the Search for Resolution” — comprises a three-part series of exhibitions including the works of four women artists of Middle Eastern descent now living in the west; the return to Milwaukee of the La Vera Pohl Collection of Expressionist Prints; and the diverse works of Polish expatriate Waldek Dynerman.

Milwaukee — As part of a new direction for the ongoing exhibition collection at the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design, president Robert Rindler is pleased to announce that MIAD will inaugurate in January 2006 an annual exhibition program entitled “Culture in Transition.”

The program will focus on the diverse aspects of our rapidly changing global culture and on such themes as traditional ideas reinterpreted in contemporary forms, digital media’s impact on visual arts and design, and sub-cultures and their relationship to the dominant culture.

The inaugural program for 2006 is a three-part series of exhibitions exploring themes of “Diaspora and the Search for Resolution.” It runs from January 17 - March 25, 2006, and will be held in MIAD’s Frederick Layton Gallery, 273. E. Erie St. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, Tuesday through Saturday, except during school holidays. Admission is free. The exhibits are summarized below, and will be accompanied by detailed press releases.

“Liberation, Tradition and Meaning/Women on the Edge of Culture”
January 17 - February 11, 2006 (including Gallery Night, January 20, 2006)
Panel Discussion: Thursday, February 2, 6:30 p.m.; Artists’ Reception 8 p.m.

This first exhibition provides a visual forum for one of the greatest challenges to humanity in the 21st century — the conflict of values and perceptions between western, Eurocentric countries and the Middle Eastern world — as experienced through a group of women artists of Middle Eastern descent now working in the west. The exhibition, artist visits, and panel discussion on Feb. 2 will serve as catalysts for communication between cultures, encouraging dialogue and greater understanding and respect. They are sponsored in part by a grant from the Milwaukee Arts Board.

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The four women artists whose work will be exhibited successfully speak in the visual and iconographic languages of two cultures, creating a synergy that is, in many respects, a new cultural form. Afghanistan-born Lida Abdul, who lives in Kabul and Los Angeles and has exhibited widely throughout the U.S., Europe, and Middle East, will show a video entitled “Military Body,” which was produced in 2004. Tareneh Hemami, an Iranian-born painter/mixed media artist now living in the San Francisco Bay area, will create a multi-media installation specifically for this venue onsite in early January. Zineb Sedira, a video and photo installation artist of Algerian descent living in London, will show her 2003 video “Retelling Histories,” about her mother’s and other women’s role in the Algerian War of Independence. MIAD Associate Professor of Painting and Printmaking Fahimeh Vahdat is an Iranian-born painter, printmaker, and installation artist who will show a series of large drawings depicting women, a new body of work that is a marked departure from the paintings and prints she is best known for. (IMAGES ARE AVAILABLE FOR THIS EXHIBIT)

The next two exhibitions in the series will run concurrently from February 28-March 25, 2006, in MIAD’s Layton Gallery.

"Art of the Alienated"
20th Century Expressionist Prints from the La Vera Pohl Collection of the Wriston Art Gallery, Lawrence University, Appleton
February 28 - March 25, 2006
Lecture: Friday, March 3, 5 p.m., by Frank Lewis, Director of Exhibitions at the Wriston Art Gallery; Reception, 6 - 8 p.m.

This exhibition will display 12 prints by a group of artists whose names read like a who’s who of early 20th century modernism: Alexander Archipenko, Lyonel Feininger, Wassily Kandinsky, Ludwig Meider, Franz Marc, Max Pechstein, and Egon Schiele. The prints on display were produced in diverse printmaking media such as woodcuts, etchings, lithographs, and serigraphs, the majority of them during the creatively rich but socially tumultuous inter-war years, when many of these artists were viewed as degenerates by the Nazi regime. Alienated by the social mores of their time and the seemingly irrelevant traditions of the period’s academic art, they moved their work into new directions for visual art, defining what was later to be regarded as one of the most important expressions of the early modern period. (IMAGES ARE AVAILABLE)

La Vera Pohl, a young Milwaukee woman, acquired this diverse collection starting in the 1930s in Germany, by negotiating with heirs and visiting galleries and auctions. This will be the first exhibition of the Pohl collection in Milwaukee since it was moved to Lawrence University in Appleton after the school merged with the Downer Teacher’s College in 1964. The exhibition is co-curated by James Slauson, MIAD Professor of Art History, with MIAD’s Director of Galleries Mark Lawson.

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“The Beast is waiting…”
February 28 – March 25, 2006
Reception: Thursday, March 2, 6-8 p.m.

MIAD Professor of Fine Arts Waldek Dynerman is a Polish expatriate who was educated as a painter at the Warsaw Fine Arts Academy. He has since expanded his work to such disciplines as drawing, sculpture, printmaking, and, recently, photography and video. Amid the several layers of content is a sense of sadness and sometimes despair, possibly arising from his family’s history of war and survival during World War II and his own immigration to America. Even though dark in its core, Dynerman’s work always contains an element of playful irony, and a hope for positive resolution. On display will be diverse works ranging from prints, sculpture, paintings, photographs, and a video entitled “Memory Check” that explores what is being remembered about Jews in Poland 60 years after the horrors of the World War II era. (IMAGES AVAILABLE)

“Culture in Transition” supports MIAD’s mission of presenting world-class exhibits that engage the community in exposition of critical issues in art and design and in critical discourse on a diverse array of relevant cultural issues.

MIAD is Wisconsin’s only college devoted exclusively to the education of artists and designers. Founded in 1974, it today enrolls 650 talented students from across the country who are taught by artists and designers recognized regionally and nationally for their professional and educational accomplishments. Its unique academic approach blends curricular and extracurricular experiences, a community service requirement, and liberal studies in 11 majors toward the bachelor of fine arts degree. As critical thinkers, MIAD’s graduates are educated to be Wisconsin’s and the Midwest’s next “creative class” - people who become change agents not only in art and design, but also in our culture and society. 80 percent of MIAD’s graduates remain in Wisconsin, contributing a vital “brain gain” to the state.

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