



**MELANIE SMITH'S FILMS WILL HAVE U.S. DEBUT AT  
MIAMI ART MUSEUM**

**MAC@MAM Presents "Melanie Smith with Rafael Ortega: Parres Trilogy"  
March 6, 2008—June 29, 2008**

MIAMI, November xx, 2007—Continuing its innovative collaboration with Miami Art Central (MAC@MAM), Miami Art Museum will present *Melanie Smith with Rafael Ortega: Parres Trilogy*, an examination of the urban experience in Mexico City, the artist's adopted hometown. The three-part film series will make its U.S. debut alongside two other recent works. The exhibition will premiere on March 6, 2008 and will remain on view in MAM's "New Works" focus gallery through June 29, 2008.

British-born Melanie Smith has spent nearly two decades engaged in an exploration of Mexico City. Since 1989, life in the world's third largest urban center has profoundly impacted her work, which reflects the city's tensions and intrinsic contradictions. Trained as a painter, Smith's work also encompasses drawing, photography, installation, and video. Using colors, textures, materials, and found objects from the urban environment, Smith examines the complex and chaotic visual elements of the twenty-first century city. In her detailed investigations of Mexico City—from the air and from the ground, from the crowded grid of city blocks to the commerce on the street—Smith draws from the visual impact of the megalopolis, examining the ways in which abstraction relates to the urban environment.

*Parres Trilogy* is a three-part film series developed in 2004 and 2005 with Rafael Ortega. Shot in the small town of Parres outside Mexico City, the films investigate sight and its obstruction – each by capturing a scene that is either hidden or uncovered by a "painting." In *Parres I*, a man walks toward the camera from a nearby urban neighborhood. He picks up a can of spray paint and gradually coats the screen, obscuring the scene in the background. *Parres II* moves from a close-up shot of a woman's blinking eye to a scene that is gradually masked, bleached by a heavy downpour of rain. In *Parres III* the film moves in reverse order—a muted gray painted screen is slowly wiped away by a window cleaner to reveal the noise and activity of the street. As a whole,

the *Parres Trilogy* crystallize the artist's concerns with the city—the defining setting of contemporary life—and our shared attempts to make sense of the world around us.

Additionally, the exhibition will present the paintings, *Parres 10*, (2007) and *Negative Painting*, (2008).

“Melanie Smith’s visionary work explores the intersection between abstract art and the real, human experience of life in a contemporary city, something we strive to achieve in our exhibitions and programs at MAM,” said Terence Riley, Director of Miami Art Museum. “The MAC@MAM collaboration has already enjoyed great success this fall with the U.S. premiere of *Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller: The Killing Machine and Other Stories 1995-2007*, and we are pleased to continue to offer the public an exciting roster of contemporary programming.”

*Melanie Smith with Rafael Ortega: Parres Trilogy* was curated by Rina Carvajal, MAM’s Adjunct Curator and Executive Director and Chief Curator at MAC. It will be accompanied by a MAM Gallery Notes brochure, available free in the gallery. An artist book by Melanie Smith, *Parres* (112 pps) published by Turner Books, Mexico City, 2008, will be on sale in the MAM Store.

### **Melanie Smith**

Born in 1965, in Poole, England, Melanie Smith has been living and working in Mexico City since 1989. Her work has recently been exhibited at the Tate Britain and the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, as well as O.M.R Gallery in Zurich, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia in Madrid, The Tamayo Museum of Contemporary Art in Mexico City, UCLA Hammer Museum in Los Angeles the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, and the Lab at Belmar in Lakewood, Colorado.

### **MAC@MAM**

MAC@MAM is a unique collaboration between two major Miami cultural institutions. Merging Miami Arts Central’s cutting-edge exhibitions program into MAM’s nationally recognized museum program, MAC@MAM provides an exciting new contemporary art resource in Miami’s thriving arts community. Conceived by MAC founder and MAM Trustee Ella Fontanals-Cisneros, together with leadership of the Miami Art Museum, MAC@MAM enhances and expands Miami Art Museum’s contemporary programs in anticipation of the museum’s move to a state-of-the-art new waterfront building designed by architects Herzog and de Meuron in 2011. The program launched this fall with a presentation of *Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller: The Killing Machine and Other Stories 1995-2007*, on view at MAM and Freedom Tower through January 20, 2008.

Upcoming MAC@MAM programming will include *Chantal Akerman: Moving Through Time and Space*, the first major exhibition in the U.S. of work by the renowned filmmaker and video artist.

### **Miami Art Museum**

Miami Art Museum is dedicated to engaging the public with international art of the 20th and 21st centuries, taking a hemispheric perspective of the Americas. Since its founding in 1996, the Museum has exponentially built a body of contemporary art called by *Art in America* "the quintessential Miami collection."

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Miami Art Museum is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Arts Council, and the National Endowment for the Arts; with the support of the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, the Cultural Affairs Council, the Mayor and the Board of County Commissioners. The Miami Art Museum is an accessible facility. For sign language interpretation or assistive listening devices please call MAM's Education Department 305.375.4073 at least five days in advance. Materials in accessible format may be requested.

Open Tuesday through Friday - 10 AM to 5 PM, Saturday and Sunday – noon to 5 PM. Third Thursdays until 8:30 PM. Closed Monday. Admission for MAM members, children under 12 and students (with valid ID) is free. Adults \$8, seniors \$4. Free admission every Sunday and second Saturdays.

101 West Flagler Street

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[miamiartmuseum.org](http://miamiartmuseum.org)

Garage Parking

\$5 at 50 NW 2nd Ave

between Flagler St and NW 1st St

Overflow parking at 270 NW 2nd Street

Metrorail: Government Center Station