



MOBILE MUSEUM of ART

4850 Museum Dr. ● Mobile, AL 36608-1917

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Museum to host exhibition featuring portraits of 100 Southern Artists

Mobile, Al – December 16, 2011 – For more than fifteen years, Jerry Siegel has been photographing Southern artists. Following in the footsteps of his namesake uncle, Jerry Siegel—who was one of the earliest collectors and promoters of Southern artists at his eponymous Selma gallery—the younger Siegel continually traces regional Southern artistic talent back to its creators, whom he captures in portraits as emotionally affecting as they are visually striking. One hundred of these portraits have been assembled by the Jule Collins Smith Museum for this exhibition, which will premier at the Mobile Museum of Art, January 13, 2012 and runs until April 1, 2012.



Facing South: Portraits of Southern Artists, Photographs by Jerry Siegel is a highly personal survey of some of the most interesting inhabitants of our region. A native of Selma, Alabama, Siegel has spent years traveling the area to capture the likenesses of both well-known and emerging artists in their familiar settings. *Facing South* assembles 100 black-and-white and color portraits of Siegel's subjects, including Benny Andrews, Radcliffe Bailey, William Christenberry, Lamar Dodd, Ida Kohlmeyer, Charlie Lucas, Charles Shannon, and Kathryn Windham. Expressive, intimate, and evocative, Siegel's body of work offers sensitive insights into the region's creative soul.

Jerry Siegel began his education at the University of South Alabama and graduated with honors from the Art Institute of Atlanta. His work includes documenting the unique cultural landscape of the South, focusing on many cultural aspects of the Black Belt region as well as his portraits of Southern artists.

Siegel explained the germ of the idea for the project “It started with two artists who are very dear friends, as well as mentors, guides and champions of my work: Crawford Gillis and Mary Ward Brown. The three of us would often get together, have tea, and talk about art, literature, music—and life. I had shot their portraits not so much as conceptual set up portraits, but as we spent this special time together, times that I always wanted to remember. They were captured moments. This was the genesis of the series.”

Siegel's work has been shown in solo exhibitions at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans, the Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia in Atlanta, the Wiregrass Museum of Art in Dothan, and the Montgomery Museum of Fine Art. A commissioned body of work for the

Columbus Museum in Columbus, Georgia, was featured in the 2009 solo exhibition *Now and Then: Snapshots of the South*.

A fully illustrated catalogue, which includes essays by Julian Coxe and Dennis Harper accompanies the exhibition. The catalogue was a joint production of the Jule Collins Smith Museum and the University of Alabama Press.

This exhibition was organized by the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art at Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama.

Mobile Museum of Art

The Mobile Museum of Art hosts special exhibitions from world-famous museums and collectors throughout the year. Open Monday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Museum operations are made possible, in part, by funding from the City of Mobile, Mobile County, the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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Image: Thornton Dial, Alabama, 2007. Photograph by Jerry Siegel.

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