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**NEXT Art Fair Brings Cutting-Edge Solo and Special Projects to Chicago and
Introduces \$100,000 West Collection Prize**

Invitational exhibition of emerging art at Merchandise Mart April 25 – 28, 2008

CHICAGO (April 15, 2008) – NEXT, a new invitational art fair installed on the 7th floor of the Merchandise Mart, Chicago, April 25-28, 2008, to complement Art Chicago, offers focused curatorial visions of some of the most important developments in contemporary art.

Installed within 150,000 square feet of space and more international than any other fair of contemporary art to date, NEXT boasts galleries from every important art city in the world, including Chicago, New York, Brooklyn, Los Angeles, Toronto, London, Paris, Madrid, Berlin, Cologne, Frankfurt, Leipzig, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Tokyo, Beijing, Warsaw and Bucharest. The largest collection to date of significant art trends ever assembled, NEXT presents approximately 180 of the planet's best young galleries from virtually every major international center of art production.

Featuring special artists projects, NEXT features, among other adventurous presentations, scores of works by 2008 Whitney Biennial participants, including those of artists Matthew Brannon, Omar Fast, MK Guth, Ruben Ochoa, Amanda Ross-Ho, Eduardo Sarabia, Melanie Schiff, and Javier Tellez.

Additionally, NEXT also includes substantial solo shows and large scale works by established and up-and-coming artists like Erik Benson, Ian Burns, Graham Dolphin, Marcel Dzama, Jeremy Earhart, Orly Genger, Isca Greenfield-Sanders, Stefan Hirsig, Graham Hudson, Marco Maggi, Fabian Marcaccio, Fahamou Pecou, The Royal Art Lodge, Peter Sarkisian, Ricky Swallow, Monique van Genderen, Leo Villarreal and Bucksbaum Award Winner Mark Bradford. Also participating are Venice Biennial veterans AES+F and Guy Ben-Ner; Berlin Biennial artist Suzanne Winterling; Beijing Biennial standout Eri Itol; Istanbul Biennial artist Taiyo Kimura; and Saatchi Collection painters Dan Bayles, Katherine Bernhardt, Angela Dufresne and Angelina Gualdoni —among many other highly innovative artists and artist collectives.

Additionally, NEXT will play host to several major art installations. Among these, there is the U.S. debut of *The Death of American Muscle*, a major sculptural work by Brooklyn-based artist Jonathan Schipper (courtesy of Pierogi Gallery)—which consists of two automobiles spectacularly engaged in a real-life, controlled head-on collision.

NEXT is also extremely pleased to announce a special exhibition of the famed West Collection, one of America's premier private holdings of contemporary art. Housed inside NEXT's exhibition floor and curated by Paige West and Lee Stoetzel, the exhibition "Versions of Reality" will highlight both emerging and established work by artists in the collection, such as Sebastiaan Bremer, Margarita Cabrera, Chris Jordan, Robert Lazzarini, Joan Linder, Juan Muñoz and Vik Muniz. A museum-quality exhibition and a how-to model for collecting contemporary art, the presence of the West Collection underlines NEXT's commitment to breaking new ground in its relations with artists, galleries, collectors and the public at large. NEXT is also proud to announce the inaugural version of the West Prize, a \$100,000 acquisition prize to be distributed among 10 artists' works, with an additional individual cash prize of \$25,000 in addition to a West Collection acquisition.

New Insight, a third major installation hosted by NEXT, is curated by former Documenta Curator and Renaissance Society Director Susane Ghez, and consists of art works from 24 graduate students at 12 of the country's most influential MFA programs, among them the California Institute of the Arts (Cal Arts), Carnegie Mellon University, Rhode Island School of Design, San Francisco Art Institute (SFAI), Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), and Yale University.

Other highlights will include:

§ Young London Gallery Invitational: David Risley, Domobaal, Fred, Hales Gallery, Houldsworth, Madder 139, Man & Eve, Mummery Schnelle, One in the Other, Paradise Row, Rachmaninoff's, Rokeby, Seventeen.

§ Leipzig Gallery Invitational: ASPN, Dogenhaus, Emmanuel Post, Fillip Rosbach, Laden Feu'r Nichts, Maerzgalerie.

• Young Berlin Invitational: Arratia/Beer, duve Berlin, galerie5213, galerie davide gallo, Galerie Koal, Galerie Metro, Galerie Birgit Ostermeier, Galerie Zink, Goff + Rosenthal, Herrmann & Wagner, Jarmuschek und Partner, Klara Wallner, Kunstagenten, Kuttner Siebert Galerie, loop - raum für aktuelle kunst, MyVisit, Nice & Fit, Wernicke, Wohnmaschine.

• Over 15 Private Collection Tours with shuttle bus service provided for attending dealers.

• Private Openings (selection) at Renaissance Society (reception with Franklin Sirmans), Smart Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art (reception for new Director Madeleine Grynsztejn) and Art Institute of Chicago (Tours of New Renzo Piano Contemporary/Modern Wing under construction).

• Curator/Critic/Collector Panels – featuring David Adjaye, Holly Block, Dan Cameron, Toby Devan Lewis, Sarah Gavlak, Dominic Molon, Wangechi Mutu, David Pagel, Cydney Payton, Nancy Portnoy, Franklin Sirmans, Jerome Stern, Paige West, Joan Young and many others.

• Nightly Private Lounge sponsored by Stop Smiling Magazine.

Organized by critic/curator Christian Viveros-Fauné and dealer/art fair organizer Kavi Gupta, and advised by a support team from the Merchandise Mart Properties (The Armory Show, Art Chicago,

Volta Show) led by Paul Morris, NEXT is a unique model for experiencing the best of contemporary art. Organized for collectors, curators, critics, dealers, artists and art enthusiasts, the fair represents the NEXT step in the innovative presentation of contemporary art.

NEXT EVENT SPECIFICS

Dates:

Friday, April 25 – Monday, April 28, 2008

Times:

Friday, April 25: 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Saturday, April 26: 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Sunday, April 27: 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Monday, April 28: 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Location:

The Merchandise Mart

Tickets:

\$20 for entry to all five shows. \$25 for multiple day pass.

Information:

www.nextartfair.com or 312.527.4141

ABOUT ARTROPOLIS

The Merchandise Mart will act as the hub of Artropolis, a city-wide celebration of the arts which attracts thousands of visitors to savor a rich menu of art and entertainment experiences that are unique to Chicago. Educational programs, guided tours, music, theatre and dance performances are planned at venues throughout the city, from major museums to small galleries, world-class concert halls to cutting-edge clubs, lakefront parks to exclusive private parties.

Along with Art Chicago, four additional shows will be produced concurrently at The Merchandise Mart April 25 – 28, 2008. NEXT is an exciting new invitational art fair installed on the 7th floor of The Merchandise Mart. NEXT will offer focused curatorial visions of some of the most important developments in contemporary art.

The Merchandise Mart International Antiques Fair™, an established, premier antiques destination, celebrates their 11th year, and will feature a breath-taking array in a wide range of categories from 120+ dealers from around the globe.

The Artist Project™ is an art exhibition and sale featuring original work from independent artists undiscovered by the gallery community. The Artist Project provides the

opportunity to discover interesting and affordable works directly from the artists.

The Intuit Show of Folk and Outsider Art™ exhibits self-taught art, outsider art, art brut, ethnographic art, non-traditional folk art and visionary art.

More information on Artropolis is available by visiting www.artropolischicago.com.

Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc. (MMPI) is a trade show and property management firm, specializing in managing buildings devoted to wholesale showrooms and commercial office space. MMPI produces more than 300 trade shows, market events and conferences each year.

MMPI manages The Merchandise Mart and 350 West Mart Center in Chicago; Market Square, the Suites at Market Square, Hamilton Market, Plaza Suites, Furniture Plaza and the National Furniture Mart in High Point, N.C.; the Architects & Designers Building and 7 W New York in New York; the Boston Design Center in Boston; the L.A. Mart in Los Angeles; and the Washington Design Center and Federal Center Southwest in Washington D.C.

Vornado Realty Trust, owners of MMPI, based in New York City, is a fully integrated equity real estate investment trust. Vornado's common shares are listed on the New York Stock Exchange and are traded under the symbol VNO.

MMPI Art Group is comprised of Art Chicago, NEXT, The Armory Show, Volta Basel, Volta NY and the Toronto International Art Fair, all owned and produced by Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc.

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