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Whitney Museum of American Art

PRESS RELEASE

Contact:

Howie Chen, (917) 663-2551

Shamim Momin, (917) 663-2475

September 2003

Luis Gispert: Urban Myths Part II (Return of the Hyphenaholics)
at Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria

From November 6 to March 12, 2004, the Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria will present Luis Gispert: *Urban Myths Part II (Return of the Hyphenaholics)*. For his first solo New York museum show, Luis Gispert creates a hybrid environment that fuses the stylized forms of furniture design with the material ethos of hip hop culture. Consisting of large-scale wall drawings, multi-purpose sculptures, and a collaborative sound component, the installation presents improbable objects of unexpected scale and material such as a turntable arm ornamented with chains and a baseball cap that doubles as an interactive seating unit. This exhibition has been organized by Shamim M. Momin, Branch Director and Curator, Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria.

Gispert, whose work was included in the 2002 Whitney Biennial, makes photographs and sculptures that synthesize hip-hop's visually baroque aesthetic with art-historical references ranging from Renaissance painting to early modern furniture. According to Shamim Momin, "Gispert's work investigates the excess of contemporary materialism, the historical lineage of contemporary class posturing, and the economies of rebellion." The wall drawing in *Urban Myths Part II* provides a multidimensional landscape of towering speaker formations and stereo-shaped elements. Within this space, objects such as turntables, chrome tire rims, and boom boxes exist and sometimes meld with his design-inspired furniture structures. These objects also defy the boundaries of the gallery: one sculpture excessively ornamented with platinum chain medallions defiantly extends beyond the glass façade of the space. According to Gispert, this installation reflects a formal environment in which archetypal modernist designs relate to the consumer driven notions of portability, novelty, and cultural materialism.

Born in 1972 in Jersey City, NJ, Luis Gispert received his B.F.A. from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and M.F.A. from Yale University. Gispert currently lives in New York City and has exhibited his work in solo exhibitions, including Berkeley Art Museum, Berkeley, CA, and Kendall Campus Art Gallery, Miami, FL. His work has also been featured in group exhibitions at such venues as Audiello Fine Art, New York, NY; The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, NY; The Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York, NY; Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, FL; MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, MA; and Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Bologna, Italy.

Luis Gispert: Urban Myths Part II (Return of the Hyphenaholics) is accompanied by a free brochure with an essay by Shamim M. Momin. Free gallery talks are offered every Wednesday and Friday at 1:00 p.m.

Running concurrently in the Sculpture Court until January 4, 2004, is *Katie Grinnan: Adventures in Delusional Idealism*.

The Whitney Museum at Altria is funded by Altria Group, Inc.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the opening of the Whitney Museum at Altria. The Whitney Museum celebrates the branch's ongoing commitment to the presentation and support of emerging contemporary artists through commissioned site-specific exhibitions, its renowned series Performance on 42nd, and extensive educational outreach programs.

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art:

Beside the Rose: Selected Works by Jay DeFeo October 2, 2003 - February 29, 2004

In Conversation: A Centennial Exhibition of Photographs by Aaron Siskind October 4, 2003 - February 1, 2004

Unrepentant Ego: The Self-Portraits of Lucas Samaras November 13, 2003 – February 8, 2004

Arshile Gorky: A Retrospective of Drawings November 20, 2003 – February 15, 2004

John Currin November 20, 2003 – February 22, 2004

The Contemporary Series: Irit Batsry December 10, 2003 – February 22, 2004

Visitor Information

Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria is located at 120 Park Avenue at 42nd Street. Gallery hours: Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Thursdays 11 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Sculpture Court Hours: Monday through Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., Sunday and holidays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Admission to the Whitney Museum at Altria is free.