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Press Release

High Museum Selected to Present American Pavilion at 2010 Venice Biennale of Architecture

ATLANTA, May 6, 2010 – The High Museum of Art, along with its co-organizer 306090, Inc. has been selected to present the exhibition *Workshopping: An American Model of Architectural Practice* at the U.S. pavilion at La Biennale di Venezia, the 12th International Architecture Exhibition. La Biennale opens to the public on 29 August and is on view through 21 November 2010.

Workshopping explores the role of the trans-disciplinary collaborations in architecture, spotlighting seven architecture projects with a focus on research and social engagement. The architectural groups include:

- **Archeworks** design school (Chicago),
- **cityLAB at UCLA/AUD** with **Roger Sherman Architecture** and **Urban Design** (Los Angeles),
- **Hood Design Studio** (Oakland),
- **Michael Meredith** and **Hilary Sample (MOS)** (Cambridge and New Haven),
- **Anthony Fontenot**, **Guy Nordenson**, and **Catherine Seavitt** (Princeton, New Orleans and New York),
- **John Portman & Associates** (Atlanta), and
- **Terreform** led by **Michael Sorkin** (New York).

Workshopping is co-curated by Michael Rooks, Wieland Family Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the High Museum and Jonathan D. Solomon, founding editor of 306090 Books and Acting Head of the Department of Architecture at the University of Hong Kong. The High Museum has partnered with 306090 to co-organize the exhibition, which will be designed by native Atlanta artist Danielle Roney. The U.S. Pavilion is presented by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State, which supports and manages the official United States participation at selected international exhibitions.

For the American pavilion, Rooks and Solomon present the architect as a force for change. The exhibition highlights projects in which a designer identifies an urban problem or condition and initiates research into its foundation and potential solutions without prompting by a client assignment or proposal request. The designers then engage their design skills and insights to catalyze action.

"We wanted to use this platform to propose that architecture constitutes the shared space of ideas in research, social engagement, and public-private initiatives—the foundational values of American architectural practice," said Michael Rooks.

"*Workshopping* assembles a group of architects who are actively redefining the role of the discipline, initiating collaborative projects which stake out exciting new territory. This includes experiments with new materials and structures to produce spaces for public enjoyment, research into how cities and regions can ensure social and environmental sustainability, and examples of how public-private partnerships can generate vibrant communities," said Jonathan Solomon.

The projects featured in the exhibition constitute a uniquely American model of architectural design and economic development, defined by a reliance on public and private sector collaborations and often aided by government, foundation, and non-profit support. The exhibition highlights the evolving relationship between designer, builder, and client in cities across America, as it focuses on projects and collaborations rather than individual practices, and on process and impact rather than product.

Following is an overview of the architectural groups that will be included in the exhibition *Workshopping: An American Model of Architectural Practice* at the U.S. pavilion this fall:

Archeworks—an alternative design school in Chicago co-directed by **Martin Felsen** and **Sarah Dunn**, and co-founded by Stanley Tigerman and Eva Maddox in 1993—has a history of advocating, designing and building public open spaces and community infrastructure in close collaboration with neighborhood residents, community non-profits, cultural institutions, and public/private partners. Archeworks' design projects, including the *Mobile Food Collective*, inspire collaborative action to imagine and invent healthier and ecologically sustainable cities.

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cityLAB at UCLA/AUD—with **Roger Sherman Architecture and Urban Design**—has since 2006 supported a series of projects concerned with contemporary urban issues, urban design, and the architecture of the city. Specifically, cityLAB is charged “with exploring the challenges facing the 21st century metropolis through research and design, expanding the possibilities for our cities to grow more livable, sustainable, and beautiful.” Their *Chia Mesa* project marks the transformation of ubiquitous, but struggling strip malls into a prototype and a recovery strategy for Phoenix, Arizona in order to help the city develop a singular architectural image of its own.

Hood Design Studio—led by Walter Hood, a California-based urban landscape designer and artist and professor at U.C. Berkeley—continues its longtime focused research program with projects that consider the impact of greening on urban environments of different scales through public/private collaboration. Hood’s career as an academic has allowed him “to pick and choose projects,” a luxury he has exercised carefully and often polemically, working nearly exclusively in the public realm and often in the inner city. He proactively seeks projects for the chance to create spaces that serve newly evolving public uses and opportunities that help knit together diverse communities through new thinking about open public spaces.

MOS—a dynamic young firm led by architects **Michael Meredith** and **Hilary Sample**—has completed a number of installation scale projects for public and private institutions including the 2009 MoMA PS1 Warm-Up Pavilion, Afterparty, and a temporary puppet theater for conceptual artist Pierre Huyghe at the Carpenter Center at Harvard University. Sample and Meredith are recognized as leaders of a younger generation of architects for whom multidisciplinary research approaches are second nature. Their work combines materials research, innovative structural forms, and social engagement to create spaces for urban enjoyment. MOS will create a site-specific installation in the courtyard of the American Pavilion that will provide a space for social interaction and dialogue.

Anthony Fontenot, Guy Nordenson and **Catherine Seavitt** are working to apply their years of research to push the development of soft infrastructure alternatives to the conventional hard engineering storm and flood mitigation approaches still holding sway in New Orleans and elsewhere. The collaborative initiative of Nordenson, Seavitt and Adam Yarinsky (ARO), winners of the 2007 American Institute of Architects’ Latrobe Prize, which resulted in the acclaimed book *On the Water: Palisades Bay*, along with research on the New York Upper Harbor at the Princeton University and on New Orleans by Fontenot (*Exposing New Orleans*) and the LSU Coastal Sustainability Studio (CSS), have been harnessed to model storm surge and flooding to evaluate the effectiveness and opportunities of break waters, islands, wetlands and other ‘soft’ storm barriers.

John Portman & Associates—an Atlanta based firm—sets the standard for an initiative based approach to architectural design with its *Peachtree Center* project. Still evolving with new buildings and open spaces, *Peachtree Center* illustrates how a design-led business can create a positive and powerful effect on the stability and growth of a city. Portman represents a unique model of practice, wherein the architect directly engages contextual socioeconomic drivers and responds by purchasing and assembling land, financing and designing the buildings, infrastructure and public spaces that define the project. The result in the case of *Peachtree Center* is a sixteen block project that serves as a significant network of social spaces and economic engine for the city of Atlanta.

Terreform—led by **Michael Sorkin**—undertakes self-initiated investigations into local and global issues and works on independent environmental planning initiatives on behalf of raised expectations and enlarged debate. Its *New York City (Steady) State* is an ongoing research project that asks if New York City can become completely self-sufficient within its political boundaries. The study aims to produce not simply a dramatic new plan for the future of New York but to compile an inventory of best practices and morphologies that are relevant to cities around the world.

For more information about *Workshopping*, please visit www.workshopping.us. For more information on the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State, please visit www.exchanges.state.gov.

La Biennale di Venezia

La Biennale di Venezia has for over a century been one of the most prestigious cultural institutions in the world. Ever since its foundation in 1895, it has promoted contemporary culture, new ideas, and artistic trends through major international exhibitions. La Biennale Architettura was founded in 1980 with the Strada Novissima exhibition space at the Arsenale Corderie, alongside the first International Architecture Exhibition directed by Paolo Portoghesi. La Biennale Architettura 2010 is directed by Pritzker-Prize winner Kazuyo Sejima, who will curate the 12th International Architecture Exhibition “People Meet in Architecture.” *To obtain media credentials for the August 26, 27 and 28 vernissage and for other information about La Biennale, please visit www.labiennale.org.*

High Museum of Art

The High Museum of Art is the leading art museum serving the southeastern United States. The opening of its critically-acclaimed Richard Meier designed building in 1983 put the High Museum on the cultural map and catalyzed the development of midtown Atlanta, which is today a thriving, economically vital area. In November 2005 the High opened three new buildings by architect Renzo Piano that more than doubled the Museum’s size, creating a vibrant “village for the arts” at the Woodruff Arts Center. With more than 12,000 works of art in its permanent collection, the High Museum of Art has an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American and decorative art; significant holdings of European paintings; a growing collection of African American art; and burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, photography and African art. The High is also dedicated to supporting and collecting works by Southern artists and is distinguished as the only major museum in North America to have a curatorial

department specifically devoted to the field of folk and self-taught art. The High's media arts department produces acclaimed annual film series and festivals of foreign, independent and classic cinema. please visit www.high.org.

306090

306090 is an independent non-profit arts stewardship organization. Since its founding in 2001, 306090 has worked to support architect professionals and students by organizing publications and events geared towards fostering a community of ideas and exchange within the field of design. Exploring contemporary issues in architecture "from every angle," 306090 is dedicated to opening up architectural discourse by publishing design projects, critical essays, and historic inquiries across a range of places, people and practices. Comprised of new work and untested ideas from around the world, 306090's books are an arena of open criticism, approaching contemporary conditions in political, technological and artistic disciplines on the basis of how architecture can address them. 306090's most recent book, Sustain and Develop, includes a geographically and ideologically diverse range of over 50 individual contributors. The series' fourteenth book, Making A Case, is currently in production and features radically new and varied ideas about the future of the American home. www.306090.org.

The Woodruff Arts Center

The Woodruff Arts Center is ranked among the top four arts centers in the nation. The Woodruff is unique in that it combines four visual and performing arts divisions on one campus as one not-for-profit organization. Opening in 1968, the Woodruff Arts Center is home to the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the High Museum of Art and Young Audiences. To learn more about the Woodruff Arts Center, please visit www.woodruffcenter.org.

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