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Media contact: Kitty Dumas
305-348-3892 / kdumas@fiu.edu

Cintas Foundation Presents Finalists' Exhibition for 2008 Emilio Sánchez Visual Arts Award

Opening Reception on May 10th; Award Ceremony May 20th

Miami (April 22, 2008) – The Cintas Foundation and The Frost Art Museum will present the finalists' exhibition for the *2008 Cintas Foundation Emilio Sánchez Award in the Visual Arts* at the Marcy Building, 3852 North Miami Ave., in the Design District, opening May 10 at 7 p.m. The Cintas Foundation's board of directors will announce the winner during an Award Ceremony on May 20th at 7 p.m.

The finalists (in alphabetical order) are: **Ray Azcuy**, **Barbara M. Fuentes**, **Isaac Maiselman**, **Ernesto Oroza**, **Marta María Pérez Bravo**, **Juana Valdes** and **Ricardo Zulueta**.

Ray Azcuy received both his B.A. and M.A. from University of South Florida. Besides being a working artist, he is also director of the "Schools of Choice" program for Miami-Dade County public schools. His work involves ordinary objects, which he transforms into extraordinary sculpture and installation.

Barbara M. Fuentes graduated from the Ringling School of Art and Design with a B.A. in photography and digital imaging. Through her documentary-style photography, she reveals a beautiful yet harshly realistic glimpse of Cuban culture.

Isaac Maiselman studied at the Corcoran College of Art and Design, where he received a B.A. in photography. He is currently represented by Conner Contemporary Art as part of their program for young artists, *gogo art projects. Using video as his medium of choice, Maiselman examines the power and conflicts of God and religion.

Ernesto Oroza attended the Higher Institute of Design in Havana, Cuba. His B.A. in Industrial Design is reflected in his highly architectural work which ranges from objects to installations in various types of innovative media. Oroza recently received the Guggenheim Fellowship (2007) to produce a film and an artist's book.

Marta María Pérez Bravo is a graduate of the Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA) in Havana, Cuba. She received the Guggenheim Fellowship in 1998, and is currently working in Mexico City on a FONCA Fellowship. Bravo's work, which is typically photography, deals with different aspects of Afro-Cuban myth, ritual and religion.

Juana Valdes achieved an MFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York. Her work addresses several Cuban themes such as memory, colonization and exile. Valdes seeks to create large installations that transform spaces and engage viewers with elements of magic.

Ricardo Zulueta received a BA from Florida International University and then went on to be the Helbein Scholar at New York University. He has lived and worked in New York, Paris, Madrid and recently returned to Miami. Zulueta characteristically utilizes photography, sculpture, performance and installation in his work.

The 2008 jury **for the fellowship award were Anne Ellegood**, Curator, Hirshorn Museum & Sculpture Garden, Washington DC, **Cecilia Fajardo-Hill**, Chief Curator, Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, **Dr. Paula Harper**, Art Historian and critic, Miami, **Yasmil Raymond**, Assistant Curator, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis comprised the 2008 jury.

The award carries a $15,000 cash prize to be used by the winner to further his or her creative development. The award is generously funded by the Emilio Sanchez Foundation. In 2005, the Emilio Sanchez Foundation (www.emiliosanchezfoundation.org) endowed an award in the visual arts, through 2009, in honor of the late Cuban artist and Cintas Fellow Emilio Sanchez (1989 – 1990). This will be the fourth such award in a series of five donated by the Emilio Sanchez Foundation. It was first awarded in 2005 to **Christian Curiel**, in 2006 to **Glexis Novoa**, and in 2007 to **Gean Moreno**.

More than 300 artists have been awarded the Cintas Fellowship. The only one of its kind in the nation, the program has honored some of the world's most talented Cuban artists, many at the start of their careers, who have gone on to play an influential role in the development of their disciplines. The Cintas Foundation Fellowship Program was established in 1963 with funds from the estate of the late Oscar B. Cintas, (1887–1957) a former Cuban ambassador to the United States and a prominent industrialist and patron of the arts. The Fellowship Program is administered by The Frost Art Museum at Florida International University and the Cintas Foundation.

For more information, please visit www.cintasfoundation.org or www.frostartmuseum.org