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EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO PRESENTS

THE DISAPPEARED (LOS DESAPARECIDOS)

February 23 – June 17, 2007

**Press Preview: Wednesday, February 21
11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

New York, NY – January 30, 2007 — El Museo del Barrio, New York's premier Latino and Latin American cultural institution, will present *The Disappeared (Los Desaparecidos)* from February 23 – June 17, 2007. This traveling exhibition, organized by the North Dakota Museum of Art and curated by Laurel Reuter, brings together visual artists' responses to the tens of thousands of persons who were kidnapped, tortured, killed and "vanished" in Latin America by repressive right-wing military dictatorships during the late-1950s to the 1980s.

The Disappeared (Los Desaparecidos) gathers 14 contemporary living artists from seven countries in Central and South America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Uruguay and Venezuela), all of whose work contends with the horrors and violence stemming from the totalitarian regimes in each of their nations during the mid- to late-20th century. Some of the artists worked in the resistance; some had parents or siblings who were disappeared; others were forced into exile. The youngest were born into the aftermath of those dictatorships. And still others have lived in countries maimed by endless civil war. These artists whose work is represented in the exhibition are Marcelo Brodsky, Luis Camnitzer, Arturo Duclos, Juan Manuel Echavarría, Antonio Frasconi, Nicolás Guagnini, Nelson Leirner, Sara Maneiro, Cildo Meireles, Oscar Muñoz, Ivan Navarro, Luis González Palma, Ana Tiscornia and Fernando Traverso. Also included is a collaborative installation *Identity/Identidad* by a collective of 13 Argentinean artists.

The range of visual languages -- drawings, prints, photographs, installations and mixed media -- incorporated in *The Disappeared (Los Desaparecidos)* frequently employs similar forms to evoke the presence of the missing person or persons. Bodies, faces, personal possessions and names, often methodically compiled and arranged, appear both boldly and subtly throughout the work in the exhibition. "Through their intense visual and emotional impact, these works communicate the unspeakable and reveal the artist's assumed role of social responsibility towards ending the silence surrounding these extreme cases of human rights violations," says Julián Zugazagoitia, Director of El Museo del Barrio. "In this context of public awareness and education through art, El

Museo, as the only venue in the Eastern United States for this internationally traveling exhibition, aims to assemble as broad an audience as possible to confront and preserve the memory of these recent historical tragedies.”

Free public programs for adults, educators and children will be offered in relation to the exhibition and to encourage dialogue among viewers. Scheduled programming includes a series of film screenings, monthly family tours and workshops, an evening of music as a tribute to *los desaparecidos* in March, and an artist panel moderated by Columbia University Professor Andreas Huyssen on May 23. A bilingual illustrated color exhibition catalogue written by Laurel Reuter and Lawrence Weschler and produced by Charta, Italy with funding from The Lannan Foundation will accompany *The Disappeared (Los Desaparecidos)*.

Support for this exhibition has been provided by the Otto Bremer Foundation, the Andy Warhol Foundation and the Lannan Foundation.

About El Museo del Barrio

El Museo del Barrio is New York’s premier Latino cultural institution, representing the diversity of art and culture in the Caribbean and Latin America. As one of the leading Latino and Latin American museums in the nation, El Museo continues to have a significant impact on the cultural life of New York City and is a major stop on Manhattan’s Museum Mile as well as a cornerstone of *el barrio*, the Spanish-speaking neighborhood that extends from 96th Street to the Harlem River and from Fifth Avenue to the East River on Manhattan’s Upper East Side. El Museo was founded in 1969 by artist and educator Rafael Montañez Ortiz in response to the interest of Puerto Rican parents, educators, artists and activists in East Harlem who were concerned that their cultural experience was not being represented by New York’s major museums. In 1994, corresponding to substantial local and national demographic changes, El Museo broadened its mission to present and preserve the art and culture of Puerto Ricans and all Latin American and Latino communities throughout the United States.

El Museo’s varied permanent collection of over 6,500 objects from the Caribbean and Latin America includes pre-Columbian Taíno artifacts, traditional arts, twentieth-century prints, drawings, paintings, sculptures and installations, as well as photography, documentary films and video. Through the sustained excellence of its collections, exhibitions, publications and bilingual public programming, El Museo reaches out to diverse audiences and serves as a bridge and catalyst between Latinos, their extraordinary cultural heritage, and the rich artistic offerings of New York City.

El Museo del Barrio is located at 1230 Fifth Avenue between 104th and 105th Streets and may be reached by subway: #6 to 103rd Street station at Lexington Avenue; #2, #3 to Central Park North/110th Street station or by bus: M1, M3, M4 on Madison and Fifth Avenues to 104th Street; local crosstown service between Yorkville or East Harlem and the Upper West Side in Manhattan M96 and M106 or M2. Museum hours: Wednesday - Sunday, 11AM to 5PM. Closed on Monday and Tuesday. Suggested museum admission: \$6 adults; \$4 students and seniors; members and children under 12 accompanied by an adult enter free. To learn more about El Museo, please visit our website at www.elmuseo.org or call 212-831-7272.

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