



For Immediate Release:

## *El Museo's Bienal: The (S) Files 2011* Takes to the Streets

June 14, 2011 - January 8, 2012

*6<sup>th</sup> Latino, Caribbean, and Latin American Biennial will showcase  
75 emerging artists at 7 venues throughout New York City*

New York, NY, March 30, 2011—**El Museo del Barrio** announced today that *El Museo's Bienal: The (S) Files 2011*, its sixth biennial of the most innovative, cutting-edge art created by Latino, Caribbean, and Latin American artists currently working in the greater New York area, will take place June 14, 2011 - January 8, 2012. This year's edition focuses on the aesthetics of the street and spreads all over the city, showcasing a record 75 emerging artists in seven different venues, including El Museo.

Since its first edition in 1999, *The (S) Files* has become a successful launching platform for a wide variety of talented Latino artists. Most recently, Allora & Calzadilla, featured in *The (S) Files* in 2000, have been selected to represent the U.S. at this year's Venice Biennial. Additional notable alumni include Margarita Cabrera, Alejandro Cesarco, Pablo Helguera, Tamara Kostianovsky, Carlos Motta, and Iván Navarro.

Curators Rocío Aranda-Alvarado, Trinidad Fombella, Elvis Fuentes, and guest curator Juanita Bermúdez have chosen the street as focal point of this year's biennial deliberately, to call attention to the direct effect of economic and political crises in art production. "Social tensions as well as economic limitations have historically pushed artists to employ their urban environment as creative setting as well as a source for materials," explains Fuentes. "*The (S) Files 2011* foregrounds both Latino artists who have been involved in New York street art movements like graffiti since the 1970s and others who due to current circumstances are taking on the street for the first time to produce their art."

It is in this context that this year's biennial aims to expand the definition of contemporary Latino and Latin American art by taking on a broad exploration of the aesthetics, events, and visual energy of the street. The exhibition will feature works in all media, including murals and graffiti as well as non-traditional presentations in fashion and music. "*The (S) Files 2011* explores how the boundaries between public/private and personal/universal are blurred by urban culture, and examines the street as catalyst for change in mainstream culture," says Aranda-Alvarado. "We are interested in how these social borders mix and dissolve in urban environments, and how artists use these social alterations as points of creative departure."

Among the themes developed in the exhibition are the influence of early New York street art movements, which were led by Latino artists; popular aesthetics and urban styles of the neo-baroque; and the creation of art works from urban debris. “What stands out is the variety of issues that artists address—from daily life situations, to social behaviors, to economic distress,” points out Fombella. “Some focus on poignant narratives to undermine false notions of comfort and security in times of anxiety, while others revisit past events or appropriate materials to recreate them in a way that is conceptual, edgy, and playful.”

In addition to its overall focus on New York-based artists every edition of the biennial includes a sidebar, which changes from year to year. *The (S) Files 2011* will celebrate the *Biennial of the Central American Isthmus (Bienal del Istmo Centroamericano)* by showcasing the work of a group of artists featured in its most recent edition. Selected by Fuentes and Bermúdez, director of the *Biennial of the Central American Isthmus*, this selection highlights artists from Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama, calling attention to Central America’s burgeoning contemporary art scene, which remains under-recognized despite its artists’ participation in global art movements. “Less than two decades after peace treaties brought some stability to the region, Central American artists are demonstrating their capability to engage in an international dialogue and develop their artistic careers despite the lack of institutional infrastructures,” details Bermúdez. “They don’t wait. They open schools, run galleries. The *Biennial of the Central American Isthmus* has come to fill a void, and that explains its rapid growth and consolidation.”

Back after a four-year hiatus due to El Museo’s sprawling renovation, *The (S) Files 2011* has grown to now include seventy five artists, a 50% increase over its previous edition in 2007 when it featured fifty one. “Even though this jump could be in part adjudicated to the four-year interval, it is definitely indicative of the strength and vitality of the Latino art scene in New York,” affirms Fuentes. “I have no doubt that this outstanding expansion of our artistic community will produce, in two years, another large pool of artists doing high-quality, sophisticated, relevant work.”

In order to represent this growth, to provide additional artists with the opportunity to show their creations, and to offer audiences from other areas of the city access to these art works, El Museo embarked on an ambitious collaboration with a group of organizations throughout the city, including **BRIC Rotunda Gallery, chashama at the Donnell, Lehman College Art Gallery, Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance, Socrates Sculpture Park, and Times Square Alliance**. This reach is particularly important to El Museo as it reflects its institutional mandate to make Latino art and culture available to people of all backgrounds throughout the city.

While El Museo will exhibit a wide variety of works, the satellite venues will feature art objects grouped by specific themes and/or media. BRIC Rotunda Gallery will showcase video and photo documentation of performance art and other politically motivated works; chashama at the Donnell will feature works made of found objects, colored sand, crocheted plastic bags and glitter among other elements; Lehman College Art Gallery will focus on animation and illustration; Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance will show graffiti works and art objects made of recycled materials, Socrates Sculpture Park will present large scale works made of materials found in urban landscapes, and Times Square Alliance will display a selection of temporary interactive outdoor sculptures and installations on the street.

Artists featured here explore the landscape as a canvas and bring elements from the street into a conversation with an urban park. Found objects, colored sand, crocheted plastic bags and glitter are among the elements used to explore this relationship. For the artists, the city becomes like a catalogue and provides an endless supply of images and materials.

El Museo will produce a map/brochure including information about all venues, works, and artists featured at each location, as well as an illustrated catalogue including essays by Aranda-Alvarado, Bermudez, Fombella, and Fuentes.

The artists featured in *The (S) Files 2011*, whose backgrounds span almost every Latin American country, hail from multiple neighborhoods across New York City including Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and the Bronx:

1. Marcos Agudelo (b. 1978, Bogotá, Colombia)
2. Sol Aramendi (b. 1968, Venado Tuerto, Argentina)
3. Firelei Báez (b. 1980, Santiago, Dominican Republic)
4. Base Collective (active since 2001)
5. Daniel Bejar (b. 1976, Bronx, New York)
6. Patricia Belli (b. 1964, Managua, Nicaragua)
7. Francisca Benítez (b. 1974, Santiago, Chile)
8. Juan Betancurth (b. 1972, Manizales, Colombia)
9. Alberto Borea (b. 1979, Lima, Peru)
10. Javier Bosques (b. 1985, San Juan, Puerto Rico)
11. Priscila de Carvalho (b. 1975, Curitiba, Brazil)
12. José Castellón (b. 1980, Panama City, Panama)
13. COCO144 / Roberto Gualtieri (b. 1956, New York, New York)
14. Donna Conlon (b. 1966, Atlanta, Georgia)
15. COPE2 / Fernando Carlo Jr. (b. 1968, New York, New York)
16. Christian Curiel (b. 1977, Ponce, Puerto Rico)
17. Abigail DeVille (b. 1981, New York, New York)
18. Dister / Dister Rondon (b. 1979, New York, New York)
19. Ohne Titel / Flo Drake del Castillo (b. 1976, Buenos Aires, Argentina)
20. Alexis Duque (b. 1971, Medellín, Colombia)
21. Gerard Ellis (b. 1976, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic)
22. Feegz, Firo173 and Figaro / Carlos Jesús Martínez Domínguez (b. 1976, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina)
23. Felipe Galindo (b. 1957, Cuernavaca, Mexico)
24. Daniel González (b. 1963, Buenos Aires, Argentina)
25. Edwin González Ojeda (b. 1973, Brooklyn, New York)
26. Julio Granados (b. 1969, Lima, Peru)
27. Alicia Grullón (b. 1977, Bronx, New York)
28. Yasmín Hage (b. 1977, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala)
29. Jonathan Harker (b. 1975, Quito, Ecuador)
30. Las Hermanas Iglesias (active since 2008)
31. Juan Hinojosa (b. 1980, New York)
32. Janelle Iglesias (b. 1980, Queens, New York)
33. Lisa Iglesias (b. 1979, Queens, New York)
34. INDIE184 / Soraya Marquez (b. 1980, Río Piedras, Puerto Rico)
35. Gisela Insuaste (b. 1975, New York, New York)
36. Jessica Kairé (b. 1980, Guatemala City, Guatemala)
37. Jayson Keeling (b. 1966, Brooklyn, New York)
38. Lady Pink / Sandra Fabara (b. 1964, Ambato, Ecuador)
39. Thessia Machado (b. 1967, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
40. Sandra Mack Valencia (b. 1972 Medellín, Colombia)
41. Sofía Maldonado (b. 1984, San Juan, Puerto Rico)
42. J. Manuel Mansylla (b. 1978, Guatemala City, Guatemala)
43. Mare139 / Carlos Rodríguez (b. 1965, New York, New York)
44. Armando Mariño (b. 1968, Santiago, Cuba)
45. Jessica Mein (b. 1975, São Paulo, Brazil)
46. Leonor Mendoza (b. 1965, Caracas, Venezuela)
47. Carlos N. Molina (b. 1959, Mayagüez, Puerto Rico)

48. Irvin Morazán (b. 1976, San Salvador, El Salvador)
49. Felix Morelo (b. 1971, New York, New York)
50. Mösko / Alvaro Alcocer (b. 1977, Mexico City, Mexico)
51. Rachelle Mozman (b. 1972, New York, New York)
52. Felipe Mujica (b. 1974, Santiago, Chile)
53. nikoykatiushka (NyK) (collaborating since 2003; b. 1978, Santiago, Chile; b. 1977, Suffern, New York)
54. Angel Otero (b. 1981, Santurce, Puerto Rico)
55. Geandy Pavón (b. 1974, Las Tunas, Cuba)
56. Antonia A. Perez (b. 1951, New York, New York)
57. Lina Puerta (b. 1969, Englewood, New Jersey)
58. Ronny Quevedo (b. 1981, Guayaquil, Ecuador)
59. Lee Quiñones (b. 1960, Ponce, Puerto Rico)
60. Hatuey Ramos-Fermin (b. 1978, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic)
61. Ishmael Randall-Weeks (b. 1976, Cuzco, Peru)
62. Justine Reyes (b. 1977, San Bernardino, California)
63. Ryan Roa (b. 1974, Tenafly, New Jersey)
64. Joaquín Rodríguez del Paso (b. 1961, Puebla, Mexico)
65. Rafael Sánchez (b. 1960, Havana, Cuba) and Kathleen White (b. 1960, Fall River, Massachusetts)
66. Rafael Sánchez (b. 1978, Newark, New Jersey)
67. Carlos Sandoval de León (b. 1975, Sabinas Hidalgo, Nuevo León, Mexico)
68. TOOFly / Maria Castillo (b. 1977, Ibarra, Ecuador)
69. Johanna Unzueta (b. 1974, Santiago, Chile)
70. Rider Ureña (b. 1972, Santiago, Dominican Republic)
71. VJ Demencia / René Juan de la Cruz (b. 1967, San Juan, Puerto Rico)
72. Adán Vallecillo (b. 1977, Danlí, El Paraíso, Honduras)
73. Simón Vega (b. 1972 San Salvador, El Salvador)
74. Elena Wen (b. 1980, Taipei, Taiwan)
75. Marela Zacarías (b. 1978, Mexico City, Mexico)

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### **About El Museo del Barrio**

El Museo del Barrio, New York's leading Latino cultural institution, welcomes 250,000 visitors annually to discover the artistic landscape of Latino, Caribbean, and Latin American cultures. Their richness is represented in El Museo's critically acclaimed exhibitions and wide-ranging collections, film, literary, visual and performing arts series, cultural celebrations, and educational programs. A dynamic artistic and community gathering place, El Museo is a center of cultural pride on New York's Museum Mile. For additional information, go to [www.elmuseo.org](http://www.elmuseo.org).

### **Press Materials**

Current and past press releases about El Museo del Barrio's exhibitions and programs are accessible at: <http://www.elmuseo.org/en/content/press/press-release>. Hi-res images are available at: <http://www.elmuseo.org/pressfiles>. User ID: media / Password: elm101709.

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