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PHOENIX INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART (phICA) 2nd EXHIBITION PROJECT *DECLARING INDEPENDENCE* OPENS OCTOBER 3rd AT ERIC FISCHL GALLERY, PHOENIX COLLEGE

(Phoenix, AZ USA)—The second exhibition project for Phoenix Institute of Contemporary Art (phICA) (<http://phica.org>) will be *Declaring Independence* curated by Ted G. Decker in a community partnership with the Eric Fischl Gallery at Phoenix College. The exhibit features 20 artists, mostly from Phoenix with some from elsewhere. The exhibition will be accompanied by a four-color handout featuring information about phICA and color images of each artist's work. The **public opening is Monday, October 3rd from 5:30 – 7:00 pm**. The exhibition continues through October 27th. In addition, phICA and Shemer Art Center and Museum present their 3rd **Sunset at Shemer Happy Hour on Thursday, October 27th from 5:00 – 7:30 pm** in one of the Valley's most stunning settings. Various artists from the exhibition will present for lively conversation, and there will be *bossa nova* music by Cleo Corcoran and Bossa Brazil, along with the opportunity to see the current exhibition at the Shemer about Phoenix business and art titan Walter Bimson.

Participating artists: **Bob Adams**, Phoenix; **Susan Beiner**, Tempe; **Bruno Belo**, Petrópolis (Rio de Janeiro); **Sue Chenoweth**, Phoenix; Colin **Chillag**, Phoenix; **Sam Chung**, Tempe; **Christian Curiel**, New York; **David Dauncey**, Phoenix; **Andrea Sherrill Evans**, Boston; **Jon Haddock**, Tempe; **Jerry Jacobson**, Tempe; **Marlyne Jones**, Phoenix; **Carolyn Lavender**, Phoenix; **Michael Marlowe**, Phoenix; **Matias Mesquita**, Rio de Janeiro; **Ann Morton**, Phoenix; **Paulo Santos**, Rio de Janeiro; **Mary Shindell**, Phoenix; **Randy Slack**, Phoenix; **Craig Smith**, Phoenix; **Karolina Sussland**, Phoenix; **Rubén Torres Llorca**, Miami; **Yann Vadaru**, São Paulo.

This exhibition pinpoints the widespread phenomenon that many exceptional artists in our community and beyond do not have commercial art gallery representation. This has been inherent in the art market since the first commercial galleries were established in the late 19th Century - a function of the market forces of supply (so many artists), fewer galleries than artists and fewer galleries due to current economic times. It is especially curious that the artists selected for this project, include those who make strong work, are shown by museums locally and outside Arizona, and who sell to enthusiastic collectors, are currently without commercial art gallery representation either in or outside Arizona. This is true for the artists in the exhibition from other cities. Effective or ineffective marketing and the lack of initiative by artists in seeking gallery representation, market forces, the state of economies, decisions by gallerists based on their personal aesthetics or what they know they can sell, the strength of art patronage in a community, and strenuous competition for eyeballs and time are variables in this discussion. However, equally significant are some artists' decisions not to seek representation in favor of being independent from the commercial gallery aspect of the art world. The exhibition brings these issues of the art market "food chain" to the forefront.

Phoenix Institute of Contemporary Art (phICA) [pronounced fi'ca, as in FINALLY! phICA!] is a not-for-profit organization which compliments other regional cultural institutions while differentiating itself through collaboration and community partnerships and by offering new portals of entry for enjoying, understanding, and interpreting contemporary art. phICA was envisioned and is structured to be organic and efficient and is a non-collecting institution with a primary focus on exhibition projects, artist residencies, and arts incubation activities. The founding Board of Directors first met to discuss their mutual vision in October 2007, officially organized the organization in 2009 with the first exhibition project launched in February 2011.

This exhibition was organized by Phoenix Institute of Contemporary Art (phICA) in collaboration with Eric Fischl Gallery at Phoenix College and was curated by Ted G. Decker. This exhibition was made possible by funding support from Tana and Ridge Smidt. Additional funding provided by Robin and Bill Charles, Denise, Dave, Libby, and T.J. Decker, Ted Decker, Jennifer and Dwain Schmitt, Ellyce and Eddie Shea, Gretchen Smidt, Sue and Scott Wallace, and by phICA. Exhibition marketing was made possible in part by a mini-grant from Ted Decker Catalyst Fund. Additional community collaboration and in-kind support provided by Cindy Dach and Greg Esser, Chico Fernandes, Bill Fielder/Bill's Custom Frames, Brent Bond, Cleo Corcoran and Bossa Brazil, Lisa MacCollum/LisaMac Studio, Tim Richard/Studio G Brand, Rikki and Tim Cook/Rikki Cupcake, Shemer Art Center and Museum, and Valber Silva.