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**THE MUSEUM OF LATIN AMERICAN ART ANNOUNCES THE
MOLAA AWARDS 08 WINNERS**

LONG BEACH, Calif. (October 17, 2008) – The Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA) is proud to announce the six merit award winners for this year's third annual *MOLAA Awards*, an invitational juried art competition for emerging and mid-career contemporary Latin American artists. The competition invited 83 artists from the regions of Mexico, Central and South America and the Caribbean who are newly emerging on the national and international contemporary art scene.

The top award winners for 2008 are: ***Best of Show*** (\$20,000)—Leyla Cárdenas (Colombia, b. 1975); ***Painting and Two-Dimensional Mixed Media*** (\$5,000)—Rocío Rendón Castañeda (Perú, b. 1972); ***Sculpture and Three-Dimensional Mixed Media*** (\$5,000)—Ángel Delgado Fuentes (Cuba, b. 1965); ***Works on Paper*** (\$5,000)—Mayra Barraza (El Salvador, b. 1966); ***Photography and Video*** (\$5,000)—Claudio Castillo (Cuba, b. 1958); ***Honorable Mention***—Daniel Fiorda (Argentina, b. 1963). The *MOLAA Awards* were established by the museum to further encourage the support of Latin American artists in the United States. The signature event and prestigious awards offer the artists greater exposure to new audiences and cash awards to assist them in further developing their artistic careers.

Each artist has donated the work of art to the museum in order to participate in the competition: the award winning works of art become a part of the MOLAA Permanent Collection; the others are offered during Auction 08 to the public for acquisition to their private collections. All proceeds from Auction 08 benefit MOLAA's ongoing exhibition, collection and education programs.

The *MOLAA Awards* are selected by a panel of distinguished judges from the field of Contemporary and Latin American art. This year's judges were Selma Holo Ph.D., Director of the USC Fisher Gallery, Catha Paquette Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Latin American Art in the College of the Arts at California State University, Long Beach and Jose Tasende, President of Tasende Gallery, La Jolla and Los Angeles. In a joint statement about the winning pieces, the judges said that they "...are confident that the works selected will enhance the MOLAA Permanent Collection given their distinct aims and visions, their diverse methods, and their quality of execution. Together they further the ongoing dialog about what constitutes art in Latin America today. They make evident that the artists are engaged not only with local concerns and traditions but also matters of global interest."

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About Museum of Latin American Art (MOLAA)

Founded in 1996, MOLAA is more than a museum; it is a renowned cultural center that presents a diverse array of special events and educational programs. A non-profit, 501 (c) (3) organization and Smithsonian affiliate, MOLAA's mission is to educate the public about contemporary Latin American fine art (by artists who have lived and worked in Latin America since WWII) through the presentation of a significant permanent collection, dynamic exhibitions and related cultural and educational programs. The museum is located in the heart of the East Village Arts District of Long Beach. For more information, visit www.molaa.org.