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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In The Poem About Love You Don't Write The Word Love

May 19th – July 28th, 2007

Midway Contemporary Art is pleased to announce the opening of *In The Poem About Love You Don't Write The Word Love*. This group exhibition, curated by Berlin-based curator Tanya Leighton, features the work of thirty-two artists and filmmakers. *In The Poem About Love You Don't Write The Word Love* consists of a constellation of new commissions, as well as a performance, talks, and a film-screening series later this summer that expand on the themes within the show.

The exhibition will open to the public on Saturday, May 19th, with a preview from 7 – 10 pm. There will be a curatorial and artist presentation at 4pm, an opening night performance by Glasgow-based artist Sue Tompkins at 8pm, and film screenings starting at 9pm. For more information on the exhibition and summer film-screenings, please visit our website at www.midwayart.org.

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This exhibition brings together works by several generations of artists and filmmakers that deploy a range of practices that engage, in tacit and explicit ways, the overwhelming media culture in which we live. Displacement is a seam that emerges and submerges through more than 30 works—a selection of film and video installations, sculptures, drawings, collage, and photographs. The works demonstrate a fundamental incompleteness, deferring any sense of a true image, reinforcing the confused neurotic state between entities, and challenging the status of the “visual.” They are, so to speak, at one step removed from themselves. These paradoxical approaches, emblematic of the way in which many artists are working today, demonstrate a deep and complex resistance to the dictatorship of spectacle.

At the time of the 1991 Gulf War, Serge Daney, one of the greatest French film critics, offered a straightforward distinction between the “image,” and the “visual.” His theory contrasted the undifferentiated visual flux of the communications loop to the discrete, specific image that always testifies to something off screen, to an “other.” The “visual” he said is that which decorates, runs in a loop, “the optical verification of a purely technical function,” like a *cliché* or a closed-circuit feed. It is “something like pornographic spectacle, which is just the ecstatic confirmation that the organs still function, nothing else.” The “image” on the contrary is that which still holds out against an experience of vision and of the “visual.” Even though it necessarily has an irreducible core, the image, is nevertheless missing something; “it is always *more and less than itself.*”

What sort of resistance or touching memory is possible? Daney asks. How can contemporary art attempt to fracture the dominant model of the “visual” and its thoughtless circulation? What kind of audience can it address or mobilize? What form of community can it suggest? What kind of

action is possible within this paradigm? *In The Poem About Love You Don't Write The Word Love* seeks to face these questions through works that articulate challenges to the assumed shape of the "visual," destabilizing its authority and complicating the increasingly urgent tensions between the "visual" and the "image." As the title suggests, the works operate on various strategies that fabricate distances, extractions, demonstrating a profound irreconcilability and a deliberate resistance to any form of synthesis. At one step removed, in-between, unpredictable, folded, appropriated, blanked, transposed, transferred, reversed, deferred, re-dressed, translated, dis-informed, re-enacted, repeated, quoted ... dislocation recurs as a necessary tool; a poetic mechanics of returning the "visual" to its "fullness." The works present the impossibility of understanding the image as a uni-dimensional sign; rather, they understand the importance of the image as a multivalent sign, *juste une image* (Jean-Luc Godard), no less and no more, a thought, an awareness, in the present. They underscore the need to break through the static barrage of a media-saturated world, to disrupt the "visual," and produce the movement of thought.

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Artists and Filmmakers: Ayreen Anastas, Marcel Broodthaers, Matthew Buckingham, François Bucher, Bernadette Corporation, Jeremy Deller, Gardar Eide Einarsson, Harun Farocki and Andrei Ujica, Jean-Luc Godard, Sharon Hayes, Nancy Holt and Robert Smithson, Emily Jacir, Gareth James, Alexander Kluge, Phillip Lai, David Lamelas, Simon Martin, John Menick, Avi Mograbi, Lucas Ospina, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Mai-Thu Perret, Walid Raad, José Alejandro Restrepo, Marc Robinson, Keith Sanborn, Allan Sekula, John Smith, Sue Tompkins, and Andy Warhol.

Curator: Tanya Leighton was recently the 2003-2004 Whitney-Lauder Curatorial Fellow at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia, where she organized the exhibitions *David Lamelas: Exhibiting Mediality*, and *The Big Nothing* (co-curated with Ingrid Schaffner and Bennett Simpson). She was curatorial assistant at the Whitney Museum of American Art for: *Into the Light: The Projected Image in American Art 1964-1977*, and the *Whitney Biennial 2002*. She is currently based in Berlin, where she is editing a book entitled *Art and the Moving Image: A Critical Reader* to be published by Afterall and Tate, London, Autumn 2007 (Series editor: Charles Esche).

Exhibition Catalogue: An illustrated catalogue with an essay by curator Tanya Leighton, writings by the artists, and critical essays commissioned from art historians and critics, participant biographies and a checklist of works has been published by Sternberg Press. A limited number of copies are available at Midway or via RAM publishing at www.rampub.com

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In The Poem About Love You Don't Write The Word Love is a touring exhibition. Previous venues include ARGOS and the Musée du cinéma, Brussels; Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow; Artists Space and Anthology Film Archives, New York. Forthcoming: OVERGATEN—Institute for Contemporary Arts, Copenhagen, November 2007. For more information on the exhibition, the tour, or to schedule an interview with the curator, please contact the gallery at info@midwayart.org or 612+605+4504.

Regular gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 11am – 5pm. Admission is free to all events.