

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Williams College Museum of Art Presents

Labeltalk 2009: Vik Muniz

January 17–May 17, 2009

Williamstown, MA—Williams College Museum of Art (WCMA) presents *Labeltalk 2009: Vik Muniz*, an exhibition that features ten Memory Renderings from contemporary artist Vik Muniz’s 1989-2000 series “The Best of *Life*.” These artworks were recently acquired by the museum for its collection.

Memory Renderings are photographs of drawings that Vik Muniz (Brazilian, born 1961) drew from his recollection of a photograph printed in *The Best of “Life,”* a book that featured iconic photographs from *Life* magazine between 1936 and 1972. Muniz photographed his drawings in soft focus to make them blurry and remove evidence of his hand. He also printed them through a half tone screen to simulate the pixilated quality of photographs published in a magazine—the format in which most people first encountered the images. The iconic images include the student standing in front of tanks in Tiananmen Square, soldiers raising the American flag in Iwo Jima, and John John saluting his father’s coffin.

Labeltalk is an innovative exhibition series that highlights the rich teaching potential of art. Each *Labeltalk* presents artwork from the museum’s collection along with a publication that includes written responses by Williams faculty members from a variety of departments. This year, thirteen professors from the following departments participated: American studies, art, astronomy, computer

science, economics, English, history, mathematics, psychology, religion, Russian, and theatre.

“The Labeltalk series is built on this very point: there is no single perspective from which to approach a work of art,” explains curator Elizabeth Gallerani. “Vik Muniz’s series has already been studied by courses in at least four different departments. With the layering of the artworks and their connection to cultural memory, these works are engaging on many levels, including artistic process, visual culture, and history, among others.”

Labeltalk 2009: Vik Muniz was organized by Elizabeth Gallerani, the Coordinator of Mellon Academic Programs. It is the seventh in a series originally created in 1995 with the support of a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The project supports the museum’s mission to advance learning through lively and innovative approaches to art.

Williams College Museum of Art

The Williams College Museum of Art is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 10 am to 5 pm, and on Sunday from 1 to 5 pm. Admission is free and the museum is wheelchair accessible. Contact: Suzanne Silitch, Director of Communications and Strategy, 413.597.3178.