

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CONTEMPORARY ARTS MUSEUM HOUSTON PRESENTS
*CLASS PICTURES: PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAWOUD BEY***

HOUSTON, Texas (Thursday, February 21, 2008) – From March 14 to May 11, the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston will present the 160th installment in its *Perspectives* series, *Class Pictures: Photographs by Dawoud Bey*. Organized by the Aperture Foundation, a not-for-profit organization devoted to photography and the visual arts, *Class Pictures* is comprised of large-scale portraits of American teenagers that refute false stereotypes and reveal the individual strengths of this age group.

“The powerful images of Dawoud Bey display the personalities of young adults that could not be more different from the depictions of teenagers we’re accustomed to seeing in the media,” said Contemporary Arts Museum Houston Curator Valerie Cassel Oliver. “These photographs reveal the depth of character and vulnerability that exist in real-life teenagers from our own families and communities.”

For this exhibition, Bey photographed young adults from all parts of the economic, racial, and ethnic spectrum in both public and private high schools in Detroit; Chicago; Lawrence and Andover, Mass.; Orlando; San Francisco; and New York City. Bey spent three to four weeks in each school, taking formal portraits of individual students, each made in a classroom or other school setting during one forty-five-minute period.

“Not only does this exhibition reinforce our commitment to bringing important artists to Houston, it also reflects our commitment to young audiences,” said Interim Director Linda Shearer. “From our innovative Teen Council program to our biennial exhibition of work by area high school students, the CAMH has been supporting intelligent and creative young people for many years.”

The Teen Council, a group of highly motivated high school students employed by the Museum to design public programs specifically for teenagers, is organizing an exhibition of Polaroid photography by local teenagers that will run concurrently with *Class Pictures*. The Teen Council’s exhibition, *Polarized*, will be on view in the Cullen Education Resource Room from March 7 to May 11.

Dawoud Bey (born 1953, New York) earned his MFA from Yale University School of Art and is professor of photography at Columbia College Chicago. He has been featured in numerous exhibitions—including a mid-career survey at Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, in 1995—and has received several awards, including grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and a Guggenheim Fellowship.

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Class Pictures: Photographs by Dawoud Bey
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The photographs in *Class Pictures: Photographs by Dawoud Bey* are chromogenic prints made by Duggal, New York. *Class Pictures* was organized by Aperture Foundation. The project was made possible, in part, with generous support from Agnes Gund and Daniel Shapiro. Additional support was provided by Sandra and Jack Guthman, Scott and Willa Lang, Susan and Lewis Manilow, and Madeline Murphy Rabb.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

March 7 to May 11

Polarized, an exhibition of Polaroid photography by Houston-area teens, on view during regular hours in the Cullen Education Resource Room

Thursday, March 13, 6:30 p.m.

Exhibiting artist **Dawoud Bey** in dialogue with **Valerie Cassel Oliver**, Curator, CAMH

Thursday, May 1, 6:30 p.m.

Rachel Hewlett, Education Coordinator,
Houston Center for Photography

EXHIBITION FUNDING AND SUPPORT

The *Perspectives* Series is made possible by major grants from Fayez Sarofim; The Studio, the young professionals group of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston; and by donors to the Museum's *Perspectives* Fund: Anonymous Fund at the Community Foundation of Abilene; Suzette and Darrell Betts, COADE Engineering Software, Susie and Sanford Criner, Heidi and David Gerger, Leslie and Mark Hull, Kerry Inman and Denby Auble, Solange Knowles, Marley Lott, Mike and Leticia Loya, Belinda Phelps and Randy Howard, William F. Stern, and Vitol Inc.

Perspectives catalogues are made possible by a grant from The Brown Foundation, Inc.

GENERAL SUPPORT

The Museum's operations and programs are made possible through the generosity of the Museum's trustees, patrons, members, and donors. The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston receives partial operating support from the Houston Endowment, Inc., the City of Houston through the Houston Museum District Association, and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

Continental is the official airline of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston.

The audio guide features commentary by Dawoud Bey and is supported in part by Will Golden.

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Class Pictures: Photographs by Dawoud Bey
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MISSION

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is a non-collecting institution dedicated to presenting the best and most exciting international, national, and regional art of today, and to providing a forum for the discussion and understanding of the art of our time. Through dynamic exhibitions accompanied by scholarly publications and accessible educational programs, the Museum reaches out to local, regional, national, and international audiences of all ages.

RECENT AND UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

Recent exhibitions at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston include *Andrea Zittel: Critical Space*, the first comprehensive solo exhibition of Zittel's work in North America, named "Best Architecture or Design Show of 2006" by the International Association of Art Critics; *Black Light/White Noise: Sound and Light in Contemporary Art*, the first comprehensive review of black artists working with sound and light; and the *Design Life Now: National Design Triennial*, presenting the most innovative American designs in a variety of fields, organized by the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum.

Upcoming major exhibitions include *The Old, Weird America* (May 10 to July 20), the first museum exhibition to explore the widespread resurgence of folk imagery and history in American contemporary art, organized by the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, and *Sam Taylor-Wood* (August 2 to October 5), the first major museum exhibition of work by the renowned photographer who emerged from the Young British Artists movement of the mid-1990s, organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland.

GENERAL INFO

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is located at 5216 Montrose Boulevard, at the corner of Montrose and Bissonnet, in the heart of Houston's Museum District. Hours are Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Thursday to 9 p.m.), and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. Admission is always free. For more information visit www.camh.org or call (713) 284-8250.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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