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Contact:

Libby Garrison, 415.357.4177, lgarrison@sfmoma.org
Robyn Wise, 415.357.4172, rwise@sfmoma.org
Sandra Farish Sloan, 415.357.4174, ssloan@sfmoma.org

SFMOMA SHOWCASES CONTEMPORARY ROCK POSTER ART

From May 4 to September 5, 2006, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) presents an installation of some 26 contemporary rock posters by design studio Urban Inks as well as noted San Francisco artist Rex Ray as part of the ongoing exhibition *The Art of Design: The Architecture and Design Collection*.

In 2002, graphic artists Reed Burgoyne and Sarah Mead formed the graphic design and screen-printing collective Urban Inks and joined the surge of innovative poster production that is taking place across the country. Urban Inks became known for hand-printed, limited-edition posters like those long associated with the independent music scene in San Francisco. The works combine the expressive independence first realized during the 1960s San Francisco rock-poster revolution and the do-it-yourself approach of the 1980s punk scene to striking effect. Their eye-catching, psychedelic compositions—meant to be consumed on the street and on the spot—embody the energy and motion of the music they promote. They are alive with color, heavy with striation, and animated by an abundance of imaginative hand-drawn type.

Urban Inks' posters suggest such diverse aesthetic influences as Russian Constructivist imagery from the 1910s and 1920s and the Pop art pieces of Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein. Their free-hand lettering is a signature element, revealing the artists' well-honed skills in the graphic arts even as it resists the rigidity and precision of traditional typography. Letters slide, bend, and rearrange themselves, aligning Urban Inks with such vanguards of Bay Area poster art as Wes Wilson and Victor Moscoso, whose sinuous, colorful, distorted letterforms served as a visual metaphor for the psychedelic experience.

Burgoyne and Mead understand the explicit function of the poster—to attract the eye in the briefest of intervals—and their remarkable designs, while unquestioningly beautiful, are the means to a desired end: the creation of a visually compelling work. It is in their deceptively simple ambition that these works so excel.

Works by Urban Inks featured in the exhibition include *Pansy Division*, *the Ex-Boyfriends*, *Paradise Island*,



Urban Inks, *Asians That Rock Tour 2004: Whysall Lane with Mike Park, Jenny Choi, Skyflakes, Clarendon Hills; Slim's; August 25th, 2004; 2004; screen print; Collection SFMOMA*

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Rex Ray, *Pixies, the Distillers, Knife and Fork; The Greek Theater; September 25, 2004*; 2004; offset lithograph; Collection SFMOMA

the Gay Gays; Cafe du Nord; June 26, 2004 (2004); *Bottles & Skulls, Year Future, Pitch Black, Fleshies; Bottom of the Hill; July 10, 2004* (2004); *Von Iva's Record Release Show Featuring: The Bellrays, Von Iva, Harold Ray; Slim's; March 27, 2005* (2005); *New Year's Eve 2005: The Lovemakers, Paradise Boys, DJ Jefrodisiac; Cafe du Nord; December 31, 2004* (2004); and *Magnolia Electric Co. and the Court & Spark Spring Tour 2005* (2005).

This special installation also includes 13 rock poster designs by San Francisco artist Rex Ray. Since launching his career more than two decades ago, Ray has created an extensive oeuvre in a wide variety of art forms, from paintings and collages to prints and photographs. Ray is also an accomplished and award-winning graphic artist, having produced distinctive and striking designs for books, magazines, posters, and compact disk covers, including recent projects for Steven Spielberg and David Bowie. His works on view in the current installation include *Morcheeba; The Fillmore; August 28, 1998* (1998); *Radiohead, Beta Band; Shoreline Amphitheater; June 27, 2001* (2001); *Siouxsie and the Banshees, Ex-Girl, Tribe 8; The Fillmore;*

April 24, 2002; The Warfield; April 25, 2002 (2002); *Pixies, the Distillers, Knife and Fork; The Greek Theatre; September 25, 2004* (2004); and *Scissor Sisters, DJ Sammy; The Fillmore; September 27, 2004* (2004). Ray earned his bachelor of fine arts degree from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1988.

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Museum hours: Open daily (except Wednesdays): 11 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.; open late Thursdays, until 8:45 p.m. Summer hours (Memorial Day to Labor Day): Open at 10 a.m. Closed Wednesdays and the following public holidays: New Year's Day, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, Christmas.

Koret Visitor Education Center: Open daily (except Wednesdays): 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; open late Thursdays, until 8:30 p.m. Summer hours: Open at 10 a.m.

Admission prices: Adults \$12.50; seniors \$8; students \$7. SFMOMA members and children 12 and under are admitted free. Thursday evenings after 6 p.m. admission is half-price. The first Tuesday of each month admission is free.

SFMOMA is easily accessible by Muni, BART, Golden Gate Transit, SamTrans, and Caltrain. Hourly, daily, and monthly parking is available at the SFMOMA Garage at 147 Minna Street. For parking information, call 415.348.0971.

Visit our Web site at www.sfmoma.org or call 415.357.4000 for more information.

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