Baltimore—Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) will host *The Narcissism of Minor Differences*, an exhibition showcasing 18 acclaimed artists, including Francisco de Goya, Philip Guston and Sam Durant, that will explore the dark side of intolerance using art, historical artifact and documentation, Thursday, Dec. 9, 2010–Sunday, March 13, 2011. Through more than 40 objects and four installations, the exhibition, in the Fox Building’s Decker and Meyerhoff galleries, 1303 W. Mount Royal Ave., will examine different types of intolerance by various groups: from the most overt to the benign and sublimated, from the kind of intolerance that excludes to the type of intolerance that kills. A press preview will take place Tuesday, Dec. 7, 9:30–11:30 a.m., and a reception for the public will be held on Thursday, Dec. 9, 5–7 p.m.

“The idea that intolerance holds only one form or one direction is false—large groups can be intolerant, leading to genocide and civil wars. Yet intolerance finds its way into the most comfortable living rooms, boardrooms and doctors’ offices,” said Gerald Ross, MICA’s director of exhibitions and co-curator of the exhibition.

Through the art and historical objects in the exhibition, visitors will be able to examine intolerance, an act that can take place outwardly or inwardly during critical reflection as one tries to self-preserve, identify and, at times, marginalize, segregate or eliminate that which conflicts with one’s identity, even in regard to a small discrepancy. This could be thought of as the narcissism of minor differences.

Accompanying *The Narcissism of Minor Differences*, three solo shows of MICA alumni work will run approximately one month each in Fox Building’s Meyerhoff Gallery. Critic, writer, scholar and internationally known visual artist Joseph Lewis III ’89 (Mount Royal School of Art), who creates art based on the theory that a practitioner can act as change agent, will broadly review intolerance through representational digital prints, Thursday, Dec. 9, 2010–Sunday, Jan. 9, 2011. New York sculptor Marc Andre Robinson ’02 (Rinehart School of Sculpture) will explore his South African background, Friday, Jan. 14–Sunday, Feb. 13. Rwandan-born American Valerie Piraino ’04 (general fine arts), who works in media as varied as sculpture and photography, plans to share her current installation explorations consisting of family slides and shorthand text, Friday, Feb. 18–Sunday, March 13.

Additionally, from Friday, Jan. 28–Sunday, March 13 in Bunting Center’s Pinkard Gallery, 1401 W. Mount Royal Ave., foundation faculty member Dennis Farber will present images and albums that revive the memory of those who died in the genocides of the past century.
“The exhibitions are not conceived to shock, although the hope is that the powerful works and the ideas behind them will provoke response and initiate dialogue,” said Christopher Whittey, exhibition co-curator and vice president for academic affairs and dean of Maine College of Art. “Intolerance of others is as common now as it has ever been, perhaps even more so, with the advent of the Internet and its relatively anonymous accessibility.”

A newsprint-style catalog with curator essays and black-and-white images, with the look and feel of a mass-produced political publication, will accompany the exhibition. A cell phone tour will also be offered in the exhibition.

MICA’s galleries, which are free and open to the public, are open Monday–Saturday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; and Sunday, noon–5 p.m. They are closed on major holidays.

For high-resolution images, interview requests or updated information, contact MICA’s Office of Communications at 410.225.2300.

Artists in *The Narcissism of Minor Differences* include: Jane Alexander, William Anastasi, Jonathan Borofsky, Dove Bradshaw, Mary Coble, Patricia Cronin, Sam Durant, Melvin Edwards, Maria-Theresa Fernandes, Francisco de Goya, Leon Golub, Philip Guston, Juan Logan ’98, Stephen Marc, Jaune Quick-To-See Smith, Rigo 23, Roee Rosen and Karina Aguilera Skvirsky.

**ARTWORK IN THE NARCISSISM OF MINOR DIFFERENCES:**

**Jane Alexander**

South African artist Jane Alexander’s work has been consistently themed around political hierarchies, aggression, violence, power and subservience. Drawing on personal experiences, news stories and observation, she creates a dark world that directly relates to her interpretation of the South African character. Created in the 1980s, these photomontages sublimely point to the evil structure of apartheid during that time period, the violence wrought out of it, the brutal landscapes and spaces, the humanoid and hybrid creatures that inhabited them and the tension that was a consistent undercurrent.

**William Anastasi**

William Anastasi is a pioneer of American conceptual art. From his early 1960s “blind drawings” to works that speak to very human ideas concerning prejudice and the human condition, his influence is far-reaching, including on such artists as Robert Morris, Richard Serra, Eva Hesse and pop icon Robert Rauschenberg. In *Ich Bin Jude* (translating to “I am a Jew”), Christian-born Anastasi looks at why “Jew” is such a charged word. Prejudice, the purest form of self-loathing, can in this light be identified as both engine and fuel. Where one ear relates the single syllable with the very source of our culture, another could hear an accusation.

**Jonathan Borofsky**

American artist Jonathan Borofsky’s personal goal has always been the attempt to understand himself to become a more peaceful and whole person. Directly stemming from a documentary film project involving prison inmates in California in the mid-1980s that questioned the notions of freedom, safety and fear, as well as his continual engagement in the examination of opposite energies that create this “whole,” he was led to immerse himself in an in-depth study of “the ultimate fear-maker of the 20th century.” Through this endeavor, one of Borofsky’s many observations is that, in both the fascist and the idealist search for perfection, there is “a bit of Hitler in all of us.”

**Dove Bradshaw**

Dove Bradshaw is an artist who seeks to better understand herself while finding a way to eliminate her own intolerances or prejudices. She was inspired by Albert Einstein’s belief that seeing people lack free will will keep him from “taking much too seriously myself and my fellow humans as acting and judging individuals.” Bradshaw, a pioneer in conceptual performance art and known for the indeterminacy and interventional aspects in her artwork, inverts positive film into a negative for this exhibition’s work, creating a double negative and therefore a positive with imagery of Madonna/Christ and black woman/white man.

**Mary Coble**

American performance artist and photographer Mary Coble characteristically uses her own body as a metaphor, and her work is a direct and serious challenge to intolerance and social injustice. *Note to Self* documents a 12-hour performance that paid homage to the violence inflicted on the LGBT community. The names of 438 gay, lesbian,
bisexual and transgender individuals who were murdered during hate crimes were tattooed onto the artist’s body using no ink.

**Patricia Cronin**
Patricia Cronin is a New York-based conceptual artist who uses traditionally art historical forms to address contemporary issues of sexuality, gender and class. She created *Memorial to a Marriage* (a bronze version of her marble piece of the same title) to address the issue of same-sex couples’ inability to legally wed throughout the United States, which she considers a “federal failure.”

**Sam Durant**
Sam Durant refers directly to historical events and facts that continue to have societal effect today. *Dead Labor Day* is a life-size scaffold (complete with a break room on top) modeled after the original that was built for the execution of Chicago’s infamous Haymarket Martyrs in 1887. It is inspired and given weight, in part, by Karl Marx’s statement that “capital is dead labor.” The work is currently being exhibited at the International Sculpture Biennale of Carrara before it travels to MICA for this exhibition.

**Melvin Edwards**
One of America’s foremost sculptors, Melvin Edwards has been creating sculpture and teaching art for nearly 50 years. Directly referencing the brutality and horror of lynching in America, the works he will display at MICA are part of his well-known *Lynch Fragments*, which include more than 200 works in a series created over the course of 40 years.

**Maria-Theresa Fernandes**
Maria-Theresa Fernandes wrote of *Exclusion*, which is being created at MICA for the exhibition, “This work is one of a series of works created after a period of art residencies in which women from various refuge centers participated. The work has many hidden levels of meaning. Place is an important factor in my work. Various issues relating to dress code, social and cultural issues, anti-social behavior and intolerance are of concern. The globalization of some cities, countries and people has blurred the identities of cities and ‘Place’ could be in any part of the world.” Fernandes, a textile artist, showcases her thoughtful use of the medium of stitch during her participation in Kensington Palace’s *Enchanted Palace* installation in London.

**Francisco de Goya**
This exhibition includes a work from Francisco de Goya’s infamous series of aquatints made in the 1810s entitled *Los Desastres de la Guerra*, or “Disasters of War.” Graphically depicting the horrors of wars, particularly the Dos de Mayo Uprising and the subsequent Peninsular War of 1808–14 in Spain, the series was not published until 35 years after Goya’s death.

**Leon Golub**
The exhibition will include some of the last works produced by Leon Golub, made in 2001. Golub was a master American painter who spent the last decades of his career pushing heroic imagery that reflected the horrors and brutality of the human condition, particularly the struggles of oppressed peoples by totalitarian, right-wing regimes.

**Philip Guston**
Philip Guston’s enigmatic works, the so-called “KKK” portraits (pictured), can be thought of in many ways. While they certainly allude to figures of evil, viewers might also identify them as self-portraits, alluding to the Canadian-born, Abstract Expressionist painter’s own battles of identity—between his Jewishness, role of the “modern” American painter, and father, husband and human who acutely examines his own failings while acknowledging the horrors of the world.

**Juan Logan ’98 (Mount Royal School of Art)**
A prolific painter and sculptor, MICA alumnus Juan Logan ’98 also teaches art, most recently at University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill, where he worked as a post-doctorate fellow. The painting from 1970, *Proletarian Mother Tossing Flowers on her Homosexual Son’s Grave* (pictured), was created one year after the Stonewall Uprising and subsequent riots in New York. In this luminous abstraction, Logan confronts two distinct and powerful struggles for acceptance and freedom in America. On one hand, it is the hopelessness felt in his native North Carolina community regarding gay and lesbian rights. Logan also addresses the prevailing attitudes toward homosexuality within the black
community, which was in the midst of intense political struggle at that time.

**Stephen Marc**

An award-winning photographer as well as a respected educator and lecturer, Stephen Marc is recognized for powerful photographic montages that explore the African Diaspora. One of the works that will be shown at MICA represents a part of his current project, *Passage on the Underground Railroad*, which he has worked on for more than nine years. Another work addresses issues regarding slavery, its recompense and the restitution of a culture. *Drapetomania* (pictured) is a new work completed just months before this exhibition.

**Jaune Quick-To-See Smith**

American Indian artist and activist Jaune Quick-To-See Smith is an elegant formalist, following in the traditions of such pop artists as Robert Rauschenberg and Andy Warhol, yet creates work layered with rich iconography: petroglyphs, slogans, commercial signs. Drawing from personal experience, these works are embedded with socio-political commentary that directly addresses the American Indian experience and its significance. *Cowboys and Indians* is her representation of a good, old-fashioned cowboy and Indian shootout, except that in this version the American Indian is missing. The cowboys take aim and shoot each other down.

**Rigo 23**

Portuguese born, Los Angeles-based Rigo 23 is an award-winning political artist and activist long embedded in the roots of social justice. His large-scale neighborhood murals and primitive “pop/folk” drawings examine a wide scope of American history, including the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense and the American Indian movement. In *America*, he criticizes the history lessons taught from childhood and alludes to the grim consequences for a great culture that is now gone.

**Roee Rosen**

Israeli-born Roee Rosen is an artist and teacher living in Tel Aviv. Rosen’s work explores identity and the notions of evil, specifically addressing the Jewish people’s collective memory and the power of creativity in extreme situations of life and death. Through video, painting and narrative, Rosen’s humor can be thought of as at once self-deprecating and incendiary. This video, *Hilarious*, challenges the viewer through a stand-up comedy routine, beginning with “light” comedic jabs at Jews and others. The comedienne, astutely played by Hani Furstenberg, wraps up her routine with a lengthy joke that takes place during the collapse of the World Trade Center.

**Karina Aguilera Skvirsky**

Karina Aguilera Skvirsky is a photographer and video artist who explores Maryland’s history of lynchings and southern geography in *North·East·South*. Growing up just two blocks from the Washington, D.C.–Maryland border and well beneath the Mason-Dixon line served as an impetus for these photographs. They are documents of spaces where great horror occurred, yet void of any marker or sign; they are simply familiar and perhaps may be unnoticed by most who pass by them. Skvirsky’s intent in revisiting these places of her childhood is to “focus on their broader implications as sites of collective memory in order to initiate a dialogue about the intersection of American history and public space.”

---

*The Narcissism of Minor Differences* is made possible in part by generous grants from The David and Barbara B. Hirschhorn Foundation and the Brenda Brown Rever Family Foundation. MICA would like to thank the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and State Museum for their loans, which helped make *The Narcissism of Minor Differences* possible. The exhibition is supported by a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council, an agency dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive. An agency of the Department of Business & Economic Development, the MSAC provides financial support and technical assistance to non-profit organizations, units of government, colleges and universities for arts activities. Funding for the Maryland State Arts Council is also provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

MICA’s exhibitions and public programs receive support from the Robert and Jane Meyerhoff Special Programs Endowment; the Amalie Rothschild ’34 Residency Program Endowment; The Rouse Company Endowment; the Richard Kalter Endowment; the Rosetta A. Samson and Sadie B. Feldman Endowment; the Maryland State Arts Council, an agency dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive; and the generous contributors to MICA’s Annual Fund.

####
Founded in 1826, Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) is the oldest continuously degree-granting college of art and design in the nation. The College enrolls more than 2,000 undergraduate, graduate, and continuing studies students from 46 states and 53 countries in fine arts, design, electronic media, art education, liberal arts and professional studies degree and non-credit programs. Redefining art and design education, MICA is pioneering interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving, research, and community and social engagement. Alumni and programming reach around the globe, even as MICA remains a cultural cornerstone in the Baltimore/Washington region, hosting hundreds of exhibitions and events annually by students, faculty, and other established artists.