SPEAKING VOLUMES: TRANSFORMING HATE WILL OPEN AT MMAC

MISSOULA –

“Speaking Volumes: Transforming Hate” is a traveling exhibition featuring artworks by artists from across the United States who used white supremacist propaganda to create thought-provoking works of art. The exhibition will open with a reception from 5-7pm on Thursday, Jan. 7, at the Montana Museum of Art & Culture’s Meloy and Paxson galleries, located in the Performing Arts and Radio/Television Center at The University of Montana.

The exhibition, which is traveling through the Museum and Art Gallery Directors Association of Montana, will be at the museum through Saturday, Mar. 6.

“Speaking Volumes: Transforming Hate” developed as a partnership between the Holter Museum of Art (HMA) in Helena and the Montana Human Rights Network (MHRN). In 2004, the MHRN secured over 4,000 volumes of white supremacist propaganda from a defecting member of the World church of the Creator (WCOTC).

Ben Klassen, founder of the WCOTC, wrote numerous pamphlets and other literature; his most widely circulated book was “The White Man’s Bible.” During the 1990s, the group held conferences and meetings near Superior, Montana and distributed hate literature in Bozeman, Butte, Missoula, Helena and other Montana towns through pamphlets.

Rather than destroy the material, the MHRN decided in partnership with the Holter to invite artists from across the nation to reflect upon, respond to, or transform the volumes. Messages of interolerance and hate were transformed into a collection of objects intended to promote civic kialogue. Participated artists include Neal Ambrose-Smith, Nick Cave, Enrique

Martin Luther King Day will be celebrated during the course of this exhibition. King stated, “Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.” The resulting artworks are both astonishing and moving—sculpture, video, painting, photography, collage, printmaking, book arts, beadwork, fiber and performance all offer thought-provoking, insightful, and beautiful answers to Dr. King’s plea, to turn darkness into light.

Three public events will take place in conjunction with the exhibition:

- 5-7 p.m. Thursday, January 7: Opening reception at MMAC galleries.
- 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 4, at the Masquer Theatre in the PAR/TV Center: Lecture by Katie Knight, exhibition curator.
- 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 18, at the Montana Theatre in the PAR/TV Center: Panel Discussion featuring artists Dana Boussard, Steve Glueckert, and Lisa Jarrett, moderated by former MHRN Director Ken Toole.

MMAC has partnered with the following organizations for this exhibition: Jeannette Rankin Peace Center, Missoula Public Library, Mansfield Library, Missoula Advocates for Social Justice, Missoula Art Museum, MHRN, National Coalition Building Institute, UM Diversity Advisory Council and Missoula Cultural Council.
Gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday and 4 to 8:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. A $5 donation is suggested, and free parking is available near the northeast corner of the PAR/TV Center.

For more information, call 406-243-2019 or go to the museum’s Web site at

http://www.umt.edu/montanamuseum.

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NOTE TO MEDIA: Digital images of selected artworks included in the exhibition are available by request. Call Becky Garner, MMAC coordinator of programs and publications, at 406-243-2019 or e-mail rebecca.garner@mso.umt.edu.

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