

## HEROES AND MONSTERS CONTEMPORARY ART EXHIBITION TO OPEN AT BYU MUSEUM OF ART

3 December 2012 – PROVO, UT – Are comic-book mythologies becoming the new morality of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? The upcoming contemporary art exhibition at the BYU Museum of Art (MOA), *We Could Be Heroes: The Mythology of Monsters and Heroes in Contemporary Art*, delves into this growing captivation with super heroes and monsters in contemporary pop culture.

The press will get a special sneak peek of the exhibition during a press preview tour on Thursday, Dec 6 at 10:15 a.m. The public opening of the exhibition will occur one day later on Friday, Dec 7 from 7-10 p.m. as part of the *First Fridays at the MOA* event series.

“We are thrilled to be showing so many significant artists from around the world who are examining these questions from unique cultural points of view, including artists from Korea, Romania, Poland, Israel, Iran, Afghanistan, Mexico, Japan, the U.K., and others,” said Jeff Lambson, Curator of Contemporary Art. “Our media is saturated with heroes and monsters right now, revealing our fascination with these archetypes that have been part of the human story in nearly all recorded history.”

As one of the museum’s five contemporary art exhibitions to open this year, *We Could Be Heroes* will explore the complexity of the myth of the hero, the hero’s relationship to the monster, and how a monster or hero is often defined by perception. At the exhibition, viewers will see a life-size Loch Ness Monster, a 20-foot tall alien girl, and compelling art created from a variety of mediums including spray paint, film, and PVC pipes.

Seth Baldrige, student curatorial assistant at the MOA, said the exhibition includes “fun, interesting and accessible works, as well as some that will really challenge viewers and their perspectives.”

Bigfoot, Captain America, and other monsters and heroes have found a home at the MOA. According to Lambson, the MOA will have more contemporary art on view this winter than any Utah institution in recent history and will feature the work of significant artists from around the world who explore the art of our time (see list of artists below).

Ann Lambson, Head of Education at the MOA, said the museum has a commitment to exhibit important contemporary art and works hard to engage its university and local audiences through its openings and educational programs. “Many of our contemporary shows have had record attendance, and we anticipate *We Could Be Heroes* will also be a major draw for our community. The robust line-up of programming includes artist lectures, art workshops, gallery conversations, and an interactive education space titled the ‘Heroes Hall of Education,’” added Lambson.

*We Could Be Heroes* examines the relationship between today’s super heroes and the ancient quests of mythological and religious heroes against villainous monsters in recorded history and folklore. To some, the abundance of super hero movies produced recently around the world has become part of a shared cultural subconscious.

Museum Director Mark Magleby said, “Nietzsche warned, ‘He who fights with monsters might take care lest he thereby become a monster.’ Communities throughout history have demonstrated their values by the heroes they exalt, and by the monsters they manufacture. This exhibition confirms the vitality of

historical mythologies in 21<sup>st</sup> century social negotiations. It brings together an extraordinary spectrum of prescient artists who are caught in the act of conceptualizing both good and evil and the perils of choosing the wrong role model.”

Record attendance is expected at Friday evening’s opening. The exhibition will be open Dec 7 through April 6, 2013.

### **Artists from Around the World Featured in *We Could Be Heroes***

Cory Arcangel, Catalin Ardelean, John Bell, Dulce Carmen Pinzon Barbosa, Claudio Dicochea, Ala Ebtakar, Tyrone Davis, Roe Ethridge, Audrey Flack, Gaijin Fujita, Cameron Gainer, Dina Goldstein, Mary Henderson, Jonathan Hobin, Elzbieta Jablonska, Jessica Joslin, Black Kirby (John Jennings and Stacey Robinson), Robert Longo, Tristin Lowe, Jeff Larsen, McDermott & McGough, Takashi Murakami, Takeshi Murata, Rachel Papo, Chad Person, Adi Nes, Paul Pfeiffer, Annie Poon, Paper Rad, James Rieck, Michael Scoggins, Andrew Sexton, Casey Jex Smith, Adam Stennett, Phillip Toledano, Rene Trevino, Ben Turnbull, Patricia Watwood, Michael Whiting, Stephanie Wilde, Yoram Wolberger, and Jason Yarmonsky.

### **About the BYU Museum of Art**

The Brigham Young University Museum of Art in Provo consistently ranks in the top 25 most attended art museums in North America, and is the most attended university art museum in North America. Its strong exhibition program and effective educational outreach draws over 350,000 visitors annually from the campus and surrounding communities. The museum has over 100,000 square feet and includes a state-of-the-art registration and storage facility. From the research and study of the artworks in the permanent collection, to the teaching and learning that occurs in classrooms and galleries, the museum plays an important role in the academic life of many students at BYU.

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