



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Fountain Gallery Presents *ASYLUM: Artists from the Living Museum*
January 14 – February 24, 2010
*Opening Reception: January 14, 6 –8 p.m.***

New York, NY – January 5, 2010 – Fountain Gallery, located at 702 Ninth Avenue at 48th Street and representing artists living and working with mental illness, announces the opening of *ASYLUM: Artists from the Living Museum*. This group exhibition will be on view from January 14 through February 24, 2010, with an Opening Reception on January 14, from 6 to 8 p.m. It is curated by Dr. Janos Marton, director of The Living Museum, which he co-founded with the Polish artist Bolek Greczynski; and Dr. Alexandra Plettenberg, curator at The Living Museum, which is a part of Creedmoor Psychiatric Center in Queens, NY. *ASYLUM* is presented through Fountain Gallery's Visiting Artists Program, founded by Glenn Close.

As Marton said in an interview in *The New York Times* (July 30, 2002): "The idea of an asylum goes back to the idea of integration versus segregation. The old asylums were in the context of segregation. Creedmoor was built far away from urban centers. It was difficult to get to. And the idea was to separate people. It was ultimately, of course, a discriminatory idea. However, once you were there, it was a different matter. The mental patients were running the place. They were working...These places can be a cultural center for the whole society. And only artists have the discipline to put in that much energy and work to create something like you have at The Living Museum."

Added Plettenberg, "The Living Museum has been entirely effective as a new model of an asylum for people with long-term mental illnesses who are stabilized on medications. The concept has allowed its members to experience a process of healing." Continued Plettenberg, "Artists such as Max Ernst, Salvador Dali, Yves Tanguy, Pablo Picasso and René Magritte were deeply influenced by the art of the insane, and they found new inspirations in the indisputable authenticity of those works and their spiritual reality."

MORE

Among the mediums showcased in *ASYLUM* are: paintings, photographs, and mixed media pieces, as well as works in clay, sculptures and installations. The Fountain Gallery space will also be used to create a “Living Museum Without Borders,” connecting with former Living Museum artists in England and Switzerland via TV monitor.

This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and by generous support from The Jarvis and Constance Doctorow Family Foundation and The Renate, Hans and Maria Hofmann Trust.

About The Living Museum

The Living Museum of Creedmoor Psychiatric Center in Queens, NY, is the first museum in the United States dedicated to the production and collection of art by people with mental illness. Founded in 1983 by the Polish artist Bolek Greczynski and Dr. Janos Marton, the museum is a 40,000 square foot oasis for innovative therapeutic healing through creative expression. By allowing freedom of expression in a completely safe and nurturing environment, the stigmatized self of "mental patient" can be transformed into "artist," creating a more positive and useful identity. The Living Museum and its artists were the subject of the critically acclaimed HBO documentary *The Living Museum*.

About Fountain Gallery

Fountain Gallery is the premier venue in New York City representing artists with mental illness. Founded in 2000 as a not-for-profit cooperative, the Gallery exhibits work by a core group of Fountain House members and collaborates with a wide network of artists, curators, and cultural institutions, providing a platform for exchange and public dialogue. Embracing artists who are both emerging and established, trained and self-taught, Fountain Gallery cultivates artistic growth and makes a vital contribution to the New York arts community.

Artworks by Gallery artists may be viewed at: www.fountaingallerynyc.com.
For further information about Fountain House: www.fountainhouse.org.

Fountain Gallery
702 Ninth Avenue at 48th Street
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Hours: Tues.-Sat. 11-7; Sun. 1-5
More than a gallery. A movement.

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