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**Fountain Gallery Presents *PORTRAITS IN EMOTION:*
11 Philadelphia Artists Reflect on Mental Illness Through Portraiture
May 1 – June 17, 2009**

Opening Reception: May 1, 6 – 8 p.m.

New York, NY – April 23, 2009 – Fountain Gallery, located at 702 Ninth Avenue at 48th Street and representing artists living and working with mental illness, today announced that *Portraits in Emotion: 11 Philadelphia Artists Reflect on Mental Illness Through Portraiture* will open on May 1, 2009 and will remain on view through June 17, 2009, with an Opening Reception on May 1, from 6 to 8 p.m. *Portraits in Emotion* is curated by Deborah Caiola and was developed through the Oasis Artist in Residence Program.

"The initial concept for *Portraits in Emotion* grew from the idea that people with mental illness tend to be isolated from the larger community," said Caiola, who teaches painting and drawing as an adjunct faculty member at Villanova University and whose own work as an artist is strongly focused on biographical storytelling and the anthropological study of particular segments within our society. Continued Caiola, "I wanted to use portraiture and the interviewing process — listening to others' stories and contemplating their lives — as an instrument for connecting with one another to combat this isolation."

Portraits in Emotion is a collaboration between Ms. Caiola and a group of 10 Philadelphia area artists, each with varying degrees of experience with mental illness. These artists are members of Oasis, an artist-run arts and education program in Philadelphia that works to empower individuals with mental illness and/or retardation through creative expression. One of the many components of the Oasis program is presentation of its artists' work in exhibitions at the Oasis gallery, and at various outside venues. Oasis works toward integration and inclusion through positive community interaction. *Portraits in Emotion* was first presented in early 2009 at the Asian Arts Initiative in Philadelphia. Oasis is part of Resources for Human Development, Inc.

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Through a series of individual interviews conducted by the group as a whole (edited portions of which will be on view in the exhibition) and portraits painted of each group member by another member, a compelling story unfolds about the marginalization of those labeled “mentally ill” and the impact the illness may have on individual creativity.

This exhibition is made possible in part by generous support from The Renate, Hans and Maria Hofmann Trust, and by Glenn Close, founding sponsor of Fountain Gallery's Visiting Artists Program.

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 can be viewed at: www.fountaingallerynyc.com.
For further information about Fountain House: www.fountainhouse.org.

To learn more about Oasis: www.oasisartcenter.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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