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SCMA Acquires Video by Major Contemporary Performance Artist Andrea Fraser

April 20, 2011, Northampton MA—Smith College Museum of Art announces the acquisition of *Little Frank and His Carp* (2001), a video by Andrea Fraser. A prominent contemporary performance and video artist who is best known for her work engaged with institutional critique, Fraser has exhibited at numerous major institutions and international biennials, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, and the Whitney, Venice, and São Paulo biennials.

Fraser's often-humorous performances investigate the politics and economics of the modern-day art museum, analyzing the function of art institutions from sociological, psychoanalytical, and feminist perspectives. She sees these institutions as sites of concealed social and political tension, which she uncovers through her performative interventions.

Little Frank and His Carp (2001) – a video shot with a hidden camera at the Guggenheim Bilbao (Spain) – captures an unannounced performance in which Fraser interacts with the architecture of Frank Gehry's famous building while listening to the museum's audio guide. Fraser uses the disembodied voice of the tour narrator (which takes on alternately ingratiating, celebratory, condescending, and authoritative tones) as a ready-made score for her performance. She responds to the suggestive language of the guide and comically follows its instructions, which seem to call for a rapturous, even sensual, relationship to the architecture it describes. Her piece marks the corporatized institution as a site of power, seeking to create and guide our responses to works of art through a particular prepackaged lens.

Little Frank and His Carp was purchased with funds from the Contemporary Associates of SCMA as part of the mission to expand the Museum's collection of new media works.

For detailed information on SCMA, visit the Museum's award-winning website:
www.smith.edu/artmuseum.