



**WOLFSONIAN**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SMALL CARS, BIG IDEAS—SMART CAR TO BE OFFICIAL VEHICLE OF THE WOLFSONIAN—FIU AND CRANBROOK ACADEMY OF ART DURING ART BASEL|MIAMI BEACH AND DESIGN MIAMI**

*Smart: Thoughts on Democracy brings artists' ideas about democracy to the streets*

MIAMI BEACH, FL (November 6, 2008)—Thanks to a partnership between The Wolfsonian—Florida International University, Cranbrook Academy of Art, and Smart Car, during the week of Art Basel|Miami Beach and Design Miami (December 2-7, 2008), Miami Beach's streets will be host to six Smart cars, each customized with a different quote about democracy from a renowned artist or designer and with graphics created by Elliott Earls, Cranbrook's artist-in-residence. The cars will be used to transport guests of the two institutions, while promoting awareness that our personal transportation choices can make a difference.

The project, titled *Smart: Thoughts on Democracy*, complements The Wolfsonian's exhibit *Thoughts on Democracy*, an innovative initiative in which more than sixty artists and designers created original works inspired by Norman Rockwell's "Four Freedoms" posters. The idea of the exhibition—inviting artists and designers to participate in a graphic "remix" that reinterprets Rockwell's posters in today's visual language and given today's political climate—has resulted in a thought-provoking and stimulating exhibition on view in the museum's lobby through December 7, 2008. Posters from the exhibition are also on display at Miami International Airport, on the second level of the Concourse D Federal Inspection Services area past the security checkpoint for the next six months to ticketed passengers or by special request. The *Thoughts on Democracy* exhibition, in turn, gave rise to the idea of soliciting artists' quotes on democracy to include on the Smart cars.

The cars will carry such thoughts as "Democracy: there is no alternative," courtesy of architect Michael Graves; "Democracy gives us liberty, freedom and hope," from architect Zaha Hadid; and "Freedom is

like Zen it questions everything,” the contribution of artist James Rosenquist. Others whose thoughts will be represented on the cars are designers Konstantin Grcic, Ross Lovegrove, and artist John Baldesarri.

### **Smart Thinking**

The Wolfsonian, a museum, research center, and library of art and design with a particular focus on the impact of technology on our world, and a tag line of “Museum of Thinkism,” points out that the partnership with Smart Car and Cranbrook Academy of Art is especially apt. “This initiative is, in many ways, a reflection of the themes of the collection,” notes Cathy Leff, director of The Wolfsonian. “We explore how design reflects and shapes our world, the role technology has played in influencing design, and the persuasive power of art and design. We’re thrilled to team up with Cranbrook and Smart Car on this initiative, which is a coming together of so many of our concerns as an educational institution dedicated to design. We also feel that it’s fitting that a museum that promotes ‘thinkism’ is working with a car company that calls itself ‘smart.’ ”

### **Related Programming**

*Smart: Thoughts on Democracy* is part of a larger and related series of programs held during Art Basel|Miami Beach and Design Miami that includes exhibitions and events at The Wolfsonian. In addition to the exhibit *Thoughts on Democracy*, also on view is *Democracy* by Francesco Vezzoli, an installation inspired by the 2008 U.S. presidential election that explores how we are manipulated by strategies of political communication. In addition, Elliott Earls has created a multimedia performance inspired by *Thoughts on Democracy* and commissioned by Gary L. Wasserman that will be included in The Wolfsonian’s Art Basel|Miami Beach V.I.P. Open House on December 5.

The Wolfsonian hosts a free and open to the public day-long design marathon on December 6, from 11 am – 6 pm. *Wolfsonian Design Marathon: Five Minutes of Designed Freedom* features thirty-five artists and designers who participated in *Thoughts on Democracy* speaking on topics of their choice for five minutes each, along with book signings by participant authors.

Available for purchase in The Dynamo Museum Shop will be signed, limited edition *Thoughts on Democracy* portfolios as well as signed, limited edition images by photographer Martin Parr from the December 5 V.I.P. Open House. All proceeds benefit The Wolfsonian.

### **About The Wolfsonian–Florida International University**

The Wolfsonian is a museum, library, and research center that uses objects to illustrate the persuasive power of art and design, to explore what it means to be modern, and to tell the story of social, historical, and technological changes that have transformed our world. The collections comprise approximately 120,000 objects from the period of 1885 to 1945—the height of the Industrial Revolution to the end of the Second World War—in a variety of media including furniture; industrial-design objects; works in glass, ceramics, and metal; rare books; periodicals; ephemera; works on paper; paintings; textiles; and medals.

The Wolfsonian is located at 1001 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach, Fla. Admission is \$7 adults; \$5 seniors, students, and children six-12; free for Wolfsonian members, State University System of Florida staff and students with ID, children under six, and Miami Beach residents with ID. The museum is open

Monday, Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday from noon-6pm; Thursday and Friday from noon-9pm; and is closed on Wednesday. Contact us at 305.531.1001 or visit us online at [www.wolfsonian.org](http://www.wolfsonian.org).

The Wolfsonian receives ongoing support from the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts; Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners; City of Miami Beach, Cultural Affairs Program, Cultural Arts Council; Crispin Porter + Bogusky; Continental Airlines, the Official Airline of The Wolfsonian; the Arthur F. and Alice E. Adams Foundation; and Pistils & Petals.

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