

# ACKLAND

Ackland Art Museum / The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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For immediate release  
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## Ackland Art Museum to Show David Wojnarowicz's Film *A Fire in My Belly*

Beginning on January 19, 2011, the Ackland Art Museum at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill joins a national conversation about artists' rights and the power of imagery, among other issues, with an installation of David Wojnarowicz's unfinished film *A Fire in My Belly* in the Museum's second floor Study Gallery. *A Fire in My Belly* will be on view during the Ackland's open hours through February 13, 2011.



Still from David Wojnarowicz's *A Fire in My Belly*, 1986–87.

David Wojnarowicz, an artist who was active in the New York City art scene during the 1980s, made *A Fire in My Belly* in 1986–87. He later disassembled the work and never completed it. The artist died in 1992.

In October 2010, the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C., included a four-minute version of *A Fire in My Belly*—edited posthumously by Gallery staff—in the exhibition *Hide/Seek: Difference and Desire in American Portraiture*.

On November 30, 2010, under pressure from the Catholic League and several members of the Congress, the National Portrait Gallery removed the film from the exhibition.

Two screens in the Ackland's Study Gallery will present both David Wojnarowicz's original fragments of *A Fire in My Belly* and the version removed from the National Portrait Gallery.

The Ackland is one of many museums, galleries, and artists' spaces across the country responding to the controversy by presenting *A Fire in My Belly*. "We are a teaching museum," says director Emily Kass. "One of our most important roles is to provide a neutral location where issues in art—historical and contemporary—can be studied and debated." In addition to the films, the installation will include resources that set the work in the context of the public response to issues of censorship, artists' rights, and the power of images to provoke and inspire.

Faculty from departments across campus, including art, communications studies, journalism, and law will use the screening with students. "The presentation of Wojnarowicz's *A Fire in My Belly* is one example of our efforts to coordinate Study Gallery installations with other campus initiatives and with clusters of related courses," says Carolyn Allmendinger, Ackland Director of Academic Programs.

## Related programming:

On Thursday, January 27, at 6:00 PM (location TBD – see the Ackland's online calendar for updates) the Ackland will present a related panel discussion with members of the UNC-Chapel Hill faculty. RSVP recommended: [ackland@email.unc.edu](mailto:ackland@email.unc.edu).

## Related local events:

### [Angels in America, PlayMakers Repertory Company](#)

From January 29 - March 6, 2011, UNC-Chapel Hill's PlayMakers Repertory Company is presenting rotating repertory productions of *Angels in America*, Part 1: Millennium Approaches and Part 2: Perestroika. Tony Kushner's epic duo of plays is set in 1980s America against a backdrop of conservatism, sexual politics, and the discovery of AIDS. More information is available at [playmakersrep.org](http://playmakersrep.org).

### [Body of Christ, The Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University](#)

From January 27 - June 16, 2011, The Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University will present a small installation entitled *Body of Christ* which investigates themes of the body, death, and spirituality in two works by Spanish artist Jerez Pérez (Bilbao, 1968- ). The contemporary pieces will be juxtaposed with European and Latin American colonial sculptures and paintings from the collection dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup> century depicting the crucifixion and other representations of the body of Christ.

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## The Ackland Art Museum

The Ackland Art Museum is located on the historic campus of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The Ackland's holdings consist of more than 16,000 works of art, featuring significant collections of European masterworks, twentieth-century and contemporary art, African art, North Carolina pottery, and folk art. In addition, the Ackland has North Carolina's premier collections of Asian art and works on paper (drawings, prints, and photographs). As an academic unit of the University, the Ackland serves broad local, state, and national constituencies. More information is available at 919.966.5736 or [www.ackland.org](http://www.ackland.org).

## Hours and Admission

The Ackland is open Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM; Thursday 10 AM – 8 PM; and Sunday 1 PM – 5 PM. Admission to the Museum is always free, with donations accepted.

## Location and Parking

The Ackland Art Museum is located on South Columbia Street, near the corner of East Franklin Street, in downtown Chapel Hill.

Parking is available at several nearby municipal lots and private parking decks, and at meters on Franklin Street. Valet parking is available on the north side of the intersection of Columbia and Franklin during the Ackland's Thursday evening hours (\$5 or free with [validation](#) from one of eighteen downtown businesses).

Most Chapel Hill Transit buses (free) provide service to downtown Chapel Hill.

*For more information, please contact*  
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