deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rachel Perry Welty 24/7
The artist’s first museum solo exhibition opens January 29, 2011 at deCordova

Lincoln, MA, December 14, 2010 – DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum is proud to announce the first solo exhibition of the conceptual artist Rachel Perry Welty opening January 29, 2011. This exhibition—her first large-scale museum solo show—will include Welty’s major works in drawing, sculpture, collage, installation, video, photography, and social media—some created especially for this exhibition. Welty’s precisely-crafted, colorful, and beautiful work often uses humor to address a wide variety of issues including, consumerism, suburbia, narcissism, information overload, language, the fleeting nature of experience, the passage of time, and ultimately, life and death. Welty takes daily life as her subject, incorporating the mundane and the extraordinary in equal measure. Mixing a Minimalist aesthetic with Pop humor, Welty’s artworks uncover the poetic elements in the everyday. The exhibition will present a number of works created by Welty over the past decade, and will also include a new series of large-scale color photographs titled, *Lost in my Life*. The artist will also be installing four site-oriented works including a starburst shaped installation of used twist ties (*New and Improved*), a drawing made out of fruit stickers (*Ripe Now*), a 40 foot modernist zip made of supermarket circular cut-outs (*Product Line*), and wallpaper made from collaged fruit stickers (*Sticker Paper*).

Nick Capasso, Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs says, “Over the past decade I have closely followed the progress of this artist’s work, and her remarkable rise through the ranks of the art world. I have been consistently impressed by both the breadth and depth of her work, and also by its sheer beauty. Very few artists receive major museum shows after just ten years of creative work, and I am thrilled and proud that Rachel is working with deCordova!”

Since graduating from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 1999, Welty has become well-known for appropriating the material that annoyingly and sometimes mistakenly, inundates our lives as her subject, including spam emails, wrong number voice messages, receipts, twist ties, fruit stickers, Facebook updates, and even Muzak. The *Lost in my Life* series are photographic self-portraits where the artist and her identity is almost totally obscured, lost amidst the “stuff,” the clutter of life. The sets for these photographs are densely packed with material recycled from previous drawings and sculptures, recording a material and personal art history. Nothing is too small or too trivial for Welty’s appropriation. From 2005 to 2009 Welty saved all the wrong number
voice-messages on her answering machine. In the video, *Karaoke Wrong Number (2005-2009)*, Welty lip syncs to this archived loop of “lost” messages while attempting to personify the caller. While *Karaoke Wrong Number (2001-2004)* is perhaps her most recognized work, deCordova will be displaying the second and most recent work in the series, *Karaoke Wrong Number (2005-2009)*, which has yet to be seen in the Boston-area.

Welty is a collector who archives and reorganizes the material and experiences of day-to-day life in poignant and visually surprising ways. For one of her seminal works, *Transcription/Medical Record #32-52-52-001 (645 pages)* (2001-2002), Welty transcribed her son’s lengthy medical record onto 23 sheets of graph paper. By meticulously hand-writing each symbol and number into the individual squares, Welty rewrote, recoded, and according to the artist “reorganized the pain of an experience” through labor, language, and a Minimalist precision. Welty, like any worried parent, attempts to control the uncontrollable.

Welty’s interest in language, systems, and mapping links her works through various media. “My interests lie in language and the formation of meaning, how we consume, sort, process and sift information, and in the small moments of everyday,” she explained in a 2009 Art21 interview. Facebook provided the perfect platform to perform the banality of everyday rituals for a larger social network. In *Rachel is* (2009) Welty updated her Facebook status every minute of her waking hours on March 11, 2009. The one day performance was captured through screenshots of each status update, and a slideshow of the shots will be displayed on ten iPhones installed in the gallery.

While the artist is an avid collector of disposable minutiae like fruit stickers and bread-bag tags, she also systematically deaccessions her possessions. Every day since October 5, 2005 Welty has selected an object to discard or “deaccession” (a museum term for the removal of objects from a permanent collection). Items eligible for discard range from ragged sweaters to stale nuts. Reflecting on the project Welty explained, “I am the curator of my own possessions.” For the installation of *Deaccession Project* at deCordova, the artist will install scans of the objects’ deaccession records, compiled by the artist, dating back to the project’s inception. For each day of the exhibition, the new deaccessioned object record-of-the-day will be scanned, printed, and added to the larger installation archive by museum staff, resulting in a 78 foot long installation.

“This exhibition is a wonderful example of the way deCordova supports local artists—from including young, emerging artists in the deCordova Biennial to exhibiting large solo shows of artists, like Rachel, who have established national reputations. For artists of every level to have a successful career in the arts, and for New England to benefit from their creativity and vision, these artists need galleries, collectors, and museums that support the their work. deCordova is committed to doing just that in a meaningful way.”

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Rachel Perry Welty 24/7 is organized by deCordova Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs Nick Capasso and Koch Curatorial Fellow Lexi Lee Sullivan, and will be accompanied by an innovative 68-page full color catalogue/artist book designed by the artist with graphic designer Anita Meyer. The exhibition will travel to the Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, in early 2012.

Major funding is provided by James and Audrey Foster, The Goldhirsh Foundation, Katherine Kirk and Malcolm Gefter, and Barbara and Jonathan Lee. Additional support provided by AT&T and John and Deborah French.

About the Artist

Rachel Perry Welty lives in Gloucester, Massachusetts and New York, New York. She is a graduate of the 5th Year Program of the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and participated in the Traveling Scholars’ exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts in both 2002 and 2006. In 2006 she was also a finalist for the Foster Prize competition at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston. She is represented by Barbara Krakow Gallery in Boston, Gallery Joe in Philadelphia, and Yancey Richardson Gallery in New York.

Educational Programming

All programs are free with Museum admission.

Curator Talk: Koch Curatorial Fellow Lexi Lee Sullivan
Saturday, February 19, 3 pm

Artist and Curator Talk: Rachel Perry Welty and Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs Nick Capasso
Saturday, April 2, 3 pm

Eye Wonder Family Program
Sunday, April 3, 1 –3 pm

Understanding Conceptual Art
Senior Curator Nick Capasso and Associate Curator Dina Deitsch
Conceptual art has been pervasive throughout modern and contemporary art history, but what does it mean, and how are we as viewers meant to understand it? Join Senior Curator Nick Capasso and Associate Curator Dina Deitsch as they walk you through some of our current exhibitions and discuss the significance and practice of this important movement.
Saturday, April 9, 3 pm

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Process Gallery
Get an insider’s perspective on Rachel Perry Welty and her artistic practice with this hands-on, interactive space. See Welty in her studio space, find out how she made her fruit sticker drawings, and connect with Welty online in this winter’s Process Gallery.

Cell Phone Audio Tour
Bring your cell phone to Rachel Perry Welty 24/7 and let the artist lead you through her exhibition. Listen as Rachel Perry Welty describes her creative process, how she develops a new series, and the ways in which art and life are completely intertwined for this conceptual New England artist.

Family Activity Kit
Check out our Family Activity Kit at the front desk of the museum. The free kit includes art making materials and activities that focus on current exhibitions and is great for ages 5–12. This is a perfect way for families to engage in contemporary art together!

Family Gallery Guides
Gallery Guides are available throughout the museum and provide information about Rachel Perry Welty 24/7 in a family-friendly way.

About deCordova
DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum was established in 1950 to educate the public about American contemporary art. DeCordova’s unique campus features both indoor and outdoor venues, allowing its visitors to celebrate and explore contemporary art across 35 acres. Inside, the Museum features a robust slate of rotating exhibitions and innovative interpretive programming. Outside, deCordova’s Sculpture Park hosts more than 60 works, the majority of which are on loan to the Museum. DeCordova also offers the largest non-degree granting studio art program in New England. DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum attracts more than 100,000 visitors from New England and tourists from around the world to its campus each year and enrolls more than 3,000 students of all ages in its studio art program.

General Information
DeCordova is open Tuesday through Sunday, from 10 am to 5 pm and on selected Monday holidays. General admission during Museum hours is $12 for adults; $8 for senior citizens, students, and youth ages 6-12. Children age 5 and under, Lincoln residents, and Active Duty Military Personnel and their dependents are admitted free. The Sculpture Park is open year-round during daylight hours. Guided public tours of the Museum’s main galleries take place every Thursday at 1 pm and Sunday at 2 pm.

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