



UNIVERSITY MUSEUM  
OF CONTEMPORARY ART  
University of Massachusetts Amherst

## NEWS RELEASE

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### ***Homage to Walter Kamys: Founder of the UMCA Collection***

**November 2 – December 11, 2011**

**Opening reception; November 2, 5-7 PM**

During his 25 year tenure as Professor of Art at UMass Amherst, Walter Kamys taught the practice of painting to a generation of students. His pedagogical achievements were equally matched by his efforts to collect original works of art as the Director of the Art Acquisition Program for the University.

For over two decades Kamys accumulated more than 600 works of drawings, prints, and works on paper that represents the foundation of the permanent collection of the UMCA (University Museum of Contemporary Art), which has grown to over 2600 works and includes photography and sculpture. His vision for students and the public to have access to and learn from original works of art has finally become a reality. The UMCA is devoting one of its exhibition spaces exclusively to ongoing exhibitions of work from the permanent collection.

The exhibition *Homage to Walter Kamys: Founder of the UMCA Collection* celebrates Kamys' early vision for a UMass teaching collection, and the recent activation of the collection under the auspices of UMCA's current director Loretta Yarlow. Whereas many of the works on view, all acquired under Kamys' watch, represent the predominant artistic trends of that time, the exhibition attempts to reflect the unconventional manner of collecting and an off-beat sense of humor that defines not only the collection, but is emblematic of Kamys himself.

Ongoing exhibitions of work from the permanent collection include: *Dialogue with a Collection*, in which local artists are invited to select works and pair them vis-à-vis their own works, resulting in a visual dialogue with often surprising 'conversations' and unusual points of view. Additionally, the UMCA in collaboration with the Art History Program invites graduate students to curate an exhibition from the permanent collection. This thesis project gives students the opportunity to engage in the entire curatorial process, complete with written essays and public talks – an invaluable experience for a museum career track. Moreover, the permanent collection is now accessible to the academic community as well as the general public by appointment.

Museum Hours: Tuesday – Friday, 11:00 AM – 4:30 PM, Saturday/Sunday 2 – 5 PM  
Closed Mondays, Veterans Day, and Thanksgiving weekend