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**FRANK STELLA EXHIBITION AT GRAND RAPIDS ART MUSEUM INCLUDES
MONUMENTAL WOODBLOCKS FOR *THE FOUNTAIN* NEVER BEFORE SHOWN IN
NORTH AMERICA**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., January 21, 2009 – The Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM), a new leading cultural destination, presents the work of Frank Stella in an exhibition by one of the great living American artists. *MOBY DICK: Frank Stella and Herman Melville*, on view January 23 through May 3, 2009, features more than thirty monumental printed works from Stella's *Moby Dick* series, the artist's greatest sustained achievement in four decades of making art. From 1985 to 1997, Stella created a major series of works linked to Melville's classic novel.

Included in the exhibition are three monumental woodblocks (called matrices), measuring 7.5 feet high and 23 feet in length, brought to Grand Rapids from the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra. The matrices have never previously been exhibited in North America; the Grand Rapids Art Museum is the first art institution outside of Australia to present the blocks along with *The Fountain*, Stella's *magnum opus* in printmaking. The blocks are carved mahogany with etched copper and magnesium inserts. The shipping crates weighed 3,500 pounds.

The Fountain is the largest and most complex work on paper ever produced in the history of printmaking. *The Fountain* was printed in an edition of eight, and is on loan to the exhibition from the artist.

Moby Dick was originally published in 1851 and was not initially well received. In 1930, the book was reissued, first as a limited edition by Lakeside Press in Chicago, and then by Random House in New York. It included 280 illustrations based upon pen and ink drawings commissioned by Lakeside from Rockwell Kent. The special presentation of Melville's book with the Kent drawings secured the novel's belated success. A preamble to the exhibition includes a group of Kent's ink drawings for *Moby Dick* and the original Lakeside edition of the book.

MOBY DICK: Frank Stella and Herman Melville is organized by the Grand Rapids Art Museum for an exclusive presentation from **January 23 through May 3, 2009**. Frank Stella and printmaker Kenneth Tyler are attending the members preview reception on January 22, Mr. Tyler will lecture. Related programming during the exhibition includes lectures, films, theater performances, weekend book clubs, and family studio activities.

About the Artist

Frank Stella (b. 1936) is one of the great living, internationally known American artists. He is a

painter, printer, and sculpture who emerged into critical recognition during the 1960s. Stella was at the forefront of a new American color abstraction. Working in series, he pioneered the shaped canvas and three-dimensional painted reliefs. In 1970, the Museum of Modern Art in New York City held a retrospective of his work, making Stella the youngest artist to receive such an honor. His work follows an evolutionary path from a minimalist geometric style to a more dynamic expressionism.

About the Grand Rapids Art Museum

The mission of the Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM) is to provide a gathering place where people of all ages and backgrounds can enrich their lives through interaction with works of art in a thought-provoking and creative way. Established in the heart of downtown Grand Rapids, the new art museum facility is internationally known for its distinguished design and LEED Gold certified status. Established in 1910, GRAM has grown to include more than 5,000 works of art, including American and European 19th and 20th century painting and sculpture and over 3,000 works on paper. Embracing the city's legacy as a leading center of design and manufacturing, GRAM has a growing collection in the area of design and modern craft. The Art Museum will celebrate its Centennial Year in 2010.

GRAM Exhibition Installation Images

Included with this release: GRAM installation images of the exhibition featuring *The Fountain* and the matrices, individually and in panoramic of both. For additional information regarding images please contact Kerri VanderHoff at 616-831-2914 or pr@artmuseumgr.org