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wolfsonian.org**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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UPCOMING EXHIBITION CELEBRATES THE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF ITALIAN FUTURISM**

Miami Beach, FL (August 6, 2010)—The Wolfsonian–Florida International University presents *Speed Limits*, an exhibition which explores the role of speed in modern life and celebrates the hundredth anniversary of Italian Futurism. In 1909, the “Foundation and Manifesto of Futurism” proclaimed that “the world’s magnificence has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed.” A century later, as the tempo of life continues to accelerate, *Speed Limits* asks critical questions about the impact of speed on our daily lives. The exhibition, on view from September 17, 2010 through February 20, 2011, is co-organized by The Wolfsonian and the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) and is curated by Jeffrey T. Schnapp, CCA Mellon senior fellow and professor at Stanford University.

“This exhibition reflects on the legacy of the Futurist movement’s celebration of speed, and moves beyond art and literature into the realms of material culture, the built environment, popular entertainment, and everyday life,” explains Marianne Lamonaca, The Wolfsonian’s associate director for curatorial affairs and education. “It also brings into focus some of the key issues that affect each of us in our daily lives, such as the ubiquity of portable communication devices and the proliferation of nutritionally deficient food.” To inaugurate the show, The Wolfsonian will organize a happening on September 16, 2010, and a formal event celebrating the museum’s fifteenth anniversary on November 11, 2010.

Speed Limits presents more than 200 works from the collections of The Wolfsonian and the CCA and features a variety of media, including posters, books, drawings, clocks, paintings, and video installations. Critical rather than commemorative in spirit, the exhibition explores a single Futurist theme from the standpoint of its contemporary legacies and probes the powers and limits of the modern era’s cult of speed in five key domains: circulation and transit; construction and the built environment; efficiency; the measurement and representation of rapid motion; and the mind/body relationship.

CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT

Multiple perceptions of traffic and its models are vital to an understanding of the city and society. The exhibition bears witness

to the prevalent dream of an urban space with freely-flowing traffic, and illustrates the concept of the grid or network that governs the movement not only of objects and goods but also of information. This is juxtaposed with the breakdown of circulation—the traffic jam. The overcrowding of city streets is captured in a series of photographs taken by John Veltri in New York City in 1938 and in the print by Benton Spruance from 1937. Visual records are accompanied by archival documents and studies of transportation efficiency and accident patterns related to increasing speeds.

CONSTRUCTION AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Architecture is a motive force behind the speeding-up of life, reflected in the increasing efficiency of construction processes. The phenomenon is illustrated through photographic sequences capturing the erection of the Irving Trust Building (New York), the Eiffel Tower (Paris), and Rem Koolhaas's China Central Television building (Beijing). The fast pace of construction of these and other buildings can be analyzed by studying dated sequential images. Prefabrication served as a major drive towards increasing construction efficiency, and is represented by various trade catalogs of homes and other building types, as well as photographs documenting their assembly.

EFFICIENCY

Examining how notions of efficient production evolved over time, the exhibition focuses on two types of space transformed by speed, one public and the other domestic: the office and the kitchen. Filing systems, processors, and office furniture play a central role making work spaces fast and efficient. A remarkable 1936 project by Josef Ehm features an electrically-powered mechanical classifier, allowing workers of the Central Social Institution in Prague to access large-scale card catalogs via mechanized desks on lifts. The exhibition also includes photographs by Balthazar Korab that capture the modernized workspaces of the 1960s, as well as studies of the productivity of workers and their equipment such as Frank B. Gilbreth's films of American workers in the 1910s and '20s. Photographs of Christine Frederick show her testing and demonstrating kitchen efficiencies in the early 20th century, when electrification, new equipment and appliances, and a redesigned space increase the speed of domestic activities. Alongside commercial artifacts and documentation, the exhibition includes architects' studies such as drawings by Le Corbusier analyzing kitchen dimensions.

THE MEASUREMENT AND REPRESENTATION OF RAPID MOTION

Addressing the cognitive challenges with which humanity is surrounded, the exhibition features material about information compression through strata of signs, signals and messages, or diagrams that reduce complex traffic data to a usable visual representation. Increasingly, humans are processing complex overlapping of information including time and related data. This growth is reflected in a collection of clocks illustrating the tempo of modern life, and the increasing sophistication and number of instruments and devices that measure motion: accelerometers, altimeters, odometers, speedometers.

Also presented are posters and graphics whose design captures the notion of speed in order to more effectively promote cars, tires, oils, and other products or services built celebrating new levels of speed.

THE MIND/BODY RELATIONSHIP

The exhibition suggests different ways in which acceleration is associated on the one hand with pleasure—ecstasy, the search for powerful sensations, and overstimulation—and on the other with

exhaustion, risk, and injury. Representations of the body in motion include the transformation of the body itself into a speeding object, gymnastics and popular athleticism in the early 20th century, the current cult of the body, natural and artificial improvements in physical culture, stimulants and tranquilizers, and the remedies associated with stimulants. Among speed's pharmaceutical avatars are caffeine, cocaine, amphetamines, and the active ingredients in energy drinks.

EXHIBITION CATALOG

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication of the same title, edited by Schnapp and co-published by The Wolfsonian, the CCA, and Skira Editore, Milan. The catalog includes new essays by Timothy Alborn, Yve-Alain Bois, Edward Dimendberg, Maria Gough, Antonino Mastruzzo, Jeffrey L. Meikle, Pierre Niox, Marjorie Perloff, Mark Seltzer, and Anthony Vidler; an anthology of historical texts; the visual essay "Rush City" by Schnapp; and studies of the impact of speed on contemporary society. The 320-page catalog (\$39) is available in The Dynamo Museum Shop. To purchase, contact paola@thewolf.fiu.edu or 305.535.2680.

The Wolfsonian thanks the following supporters for making this exhibition possible: James Woolems and Woolems Inc.; Rene Gonzalez Architects; the Funding Arts Network; Continental Airlines, the Official Airline of The Wolfsonian-FIU; The Wolfsonian-FIU Alliance; the Frances L. Wolfson Fund at Dade Community Foundation; and FPL FiberNet, a leading provider of fiber-optic solutions.

About The Canadian Centre for Architecture

The Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) is an international research centre and museum founded in 1979 on the conviction that architecture is a public concern. Based on its extensive collections, the CCA is a leading voice in advancing knowledge, promoting public understanding, and widening thought and debate on the art of architecture and its history, theory, practice and role in society today. Twenty years after opening its doors to the public, the CCA is celebrating its anniversary with an ambitious series of activities presented by Phyllis Lambert, Founding Director and Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and Mirko Zardini, CCA Director and Chief Curator. They consist of programs and initiatives that underscore the achievements of the CCA throughout 2009 and are intended to increase its influence and its role as a unique cultural institution. Further information about the CCA is available at <http://www.cca.qc.ca/en>.

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, FL. Admission is \$7 for adults; \$5 for seniors, students, and children age 6 -12; and free for Wolfsonian members, State University System of Florida staff and students with ID, and children under six. The Wolfsonian, presently on a Summer Schedule through September 15, 2010, is open Thursday from noon-6pm; Friday from noon-9m; Saturday and Sunday from noon-6pm; and is closed Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Contact us at 305.531.1001 or visit us online at www.wolfsonian.org for further information.

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