Exhibition Announcement

**ARNOLD MESCHES: THE FBI FILES**
June 19 – September 5, 2010

The **Weatherspoon Art Museum** at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro is pleased to present the exhibition **Arnold Mesches: The FBI Files**. The artwork chronicles the F.B.I.’s surveillance of Mesches for 27 years, beginning in the McCarthy era. From 1945 to 1972, they analyzed the artist’s political and social activities, and engaged friends, neighbors, and even a lover as informants, compiling a 760-page dossier on him. Eleven years ago, Mesches obtained access to the files under the Freedom of Information Act, and turned them into art. **The F.B.I. Files** consists of provocative, layered collages that have often been described as “contemporary illuminated manuscripts.” The exhibition at the Weatherspoon includes a selection of collages from the overall project as well as large-scale paintings inspired by the experience.

Mesches (b. 1923, Bronx, New York) attended the Art Center School in Los Angeles in the early 1940s. His work has been shown internationally and is included in major public collections, including the Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo;
the High Museum, Atlanta; the Denver Art Museum; the Library of Congress and
the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; the Metropolitan Museum of Art,
New York; and the Weatherspoon Art Museum. The full exhibition, *The F.B.I.
Files*, toured nationally from 2002-2005, and it seems timely to revisit the project
at this juncture in our political landscape.

Image: Arnold Mesches, *THE FBI FILES 56*, 2003, acrylic, Polaroid, paper on canvas,
14 x 22 in. Collection of Dr. Patricia Ventura.

**Related Education and Public Programming**

**Noon @ the ‘Spoon: Public Tour – Arnold Mesches: The FBI Files**
Thursday, August 10, 12 noon
20-minute public tour: *Arnold Mesches: The FBI Files*.

**Artist’s Talk with Arnold Mesches**
August 31, 5 pm
Weatherspoon is honored to welcome Arnold Mesches, who will discuss the work
in his exhibition *The FBI Files*. An artist and activist, Mesches fell under the
scrutiny of McCarthyites from 1946-1972. The FBI files gathered on Mesches
during these years would later yield startling revelations and become the catalyst
for this profound body of work.

For a complete, updated list of programs, visit [http://weatherspoon.uncg.edu](http://weatherspoon.uncg.edu).

**Guided + Self-Guided Visits**
School and community groups are invited to visit the museum on their own or via
a docent-led tour. Admission and tours are free. Please contact us at least three
weeks in advance to schedule your visit, 336.334.5770 or
weatherspoon@uncg.edu.

**About the Weatherspoon Art Museum**

**Mission**
The Weatherspoon Art Museum at the University of North Carolina at
Greensboro acquires, preserves, exhibits, and interprets modern and
contemporary art for the benefit of its multiple audiences, including university,
community, regional, and beyond. Through these activities, the museum
recognizes its paramount role of public service, and enriches the lives of diverse
individuals by fostering an informed appreciation and understanding of the visual arts and their relationship to the world in which we live.

**History**
The **Weatherspoon Art Museum** at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro was founded by Gregory Ivy in 1941 and is the earliest of any art facilities within the UNC system. The museum was founded as a resource for the campus, community, and region and its early leadership developed an emphasis—maintained to this day—on presenting and acquiring modern and contemporary works of art. A 1950 bequest from the renowned collection of Claribel and Etta Cone, which included prints and bronzes by Henri Matisse and other works on paper by American and European modernists, helped to establish the Weatherspoon’s permanent collection. Other prescient acquisitions during Ivy’s tenure included a 1951 suspended mobile by Alexander Calder, *Woman* by Willem de Kooning, a pivotal work in the artist’s career that was purchased in 1954, and the first drawings by Eva Hesse and Robert Smithson to enter a museum collection.

In 1989, the museum moved into its present location in The Anne and Benjamin Cone Building designed by the architectural firm Mitchell Giurgula. The museum has six galleries and a sculpture courtyard with over 17,000 square feet of exhibition space. The American Association of Museums accredited the Weatherspoon in 1995 and renewed its accreditation in 2005.

**Collections + Exhibitions**
The permanent collection of the Weatherspoon Art Museum is considered to be one of the foremost of its kind in the Southeast. It represents all major art movements from the beginning of the 20th century to the present. Of the nearly 6,000 works in the collection are pieces by such prominent figures as Sol LeWitt, Robert Mangold, Cindy Sherman, Al Held, Alex Katz, Henry Tanner, Louise Nevelson, Mark di Suvero, Deborah Butterfield, and Robert Rauschenberg. The museum regularly lends to major exhibitions nationally and internationally.

The Weatherspoon also is known for its adventurous and innovative exhibition program. Through a dynamic annual calendar of fifteen to eighteen exhibitions and a multi-disciplinary educational program for audiences of all ages, the museum provides an opportunity for audiences to consider artistic, cultural, and social issues of our time and enriches the life of our university, community, and region.

**Weatherspoon Art Museum**
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For more information or press images, contact:
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