

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Joseloff Gallery presents interactive, ecologically-themed exhibition titled *Mary Miss: City as Living Laboratory, Hartford* beginning April 21<sup>st</sup>**

**West Hartford, Connecticut, February 14, 2011** -- The University of Hartford's Joseloff Gallery at the Hartford Art School, one of greater Hartford's premier contemporary art galleries, is proud to announce the opening of an important exhibition of work by internationally renowned artist Mary Miss focusing on the ideas of environmentalism and sustainability. The exhibition titled *Mary Miss: City as Living Laboratory, Hartford* will center on a site-specific, multi-part installation created by Miss to bring attention to the Park River and its watershed. The exhibition will open on Thursday, April 21, 2011 with a public reception from 5-7pm in the Joseloff Gallery, and will run through Sunday, May 29, 2011.

"Eco Art," an art movement that began in the 1970s, reconnects art with science and politics around such issues as climate change, biodiversity, pollution, and water quality. It brings together people from several walks of life – scientists, artists, engineers, environmentalists – to inspire a new way of thinking about the environment, one that is less focused on forcing change through the use of frightening statistics and dry, scientific statements and instead encourages thoughtful change through the use of images, performances, art exhibits, and films.

On the forefront of the Eco Art movement, New York-based sculptor Mary Miss has spent years of exploration and research in the development of major environmental art projects. These have culminated in Miss's recent creation of a multi-layered initiative titled *City as Living Laboratory: Sustainability Made Tangible Through the Arts* (or "CaLL"). Developed in collaboration with Marda Kirn of Eco Arts Connections, Miss aims to make issues of sustainability compelling to the public, envisioning the city as a laboratory, where collaboration among planners, scientists, artists and designers can make a city's sustainability policies tangible to its citizens.

The exhibition *Mary Miss: City as Living Laboratory, Hartford* will draw from a project currently underway in Indianapolis, IN titled *FLOW (Can You See The River?)*. An implementation of the CaLL framework, *FLOW* begins with the assumption that "the river starts at your front door -- all property is riverfront property." *FLOW* seeks to engage citizens and make them aware that local watersheds provide their drinking water and support their lives, and that their actions directly affect the watersheds that surround them. The full *FLOW* project, commissioned by the Indianapolis Museum of Art, will premiere in September 2011 along the White River in Indiana.

Beginning in April 2011, the Joseloff Gallery will host a Connecticut-based *CaLL* exhibition, with a site-specific installation based on the Indianapolis *FLOW* project. This installation will center on the Park River watershed, focusing on the Park River as it makes its way through the campus of the University of Hartford.

A watershed is a geological basin that drains rain, melting snow, and ground water into a downstream watercourse or body of water. Drop by drop, fresh water run-off is channeled into soil, groundwaters, creeks, and streams, making its way to larger rivers, and eventually to coastal waters. Water, a universal solvent, is chemically altered by everything it comes in contact with: the land it traverses and the soils through which it travels. What we do on the land affects the water quality for all communities living downstream from us.

The 77-square mile Park River watershed stretches east through Connecticut from the Metacomet Ridge to the Connecticut River. The north branch of the Park River flows through the campus of the University of Hartford into a buried conduit at Farmington Avenue near the Mark Twain House. The north and south branches of the Park River converge underground and travel beneath Bushnell Park in Hartford before pouring into the Connecticut River.

*Mary Miss: City as Living Laboratory, Hartford* and its Park River *FLOW* project will aim to inspire visitors, citizens, and members of the University of Hartford community to get involved, to realize how their actions directly affect the health of the Park River, and to see how the health of the Park River affects their daily lives.

The Park River *FLOW* project will include oversized, sculptural map pins set in the land along the University of Hartford's section of the Park River watershed. These numbered pins will highlight various features along the river that have been identified as areas of interest by a group of local scientists and historians working with Mary Rickel Pelletier, Director of the Park River Watershed Revitalization Initiative. These areas may include sewer outfalls, wetlands, floodplains, parking lots draining into the river, etc. Directional markers will then lead viewers from the river to the Joseloff Gallery, where a large floor map of the University of Hartford's section of the Park River will be similarly marked and numbered. A key will be printed on the walls of the gallery detailing the features highlighted with the numbered pins. A foldout map will be available, detailing all of the map pins located on campus. Visitors will be encouraged to study the areas highlighted by the Park River *FLOW* project, and think about what other features in the city and along the river could be marked on the map.

In addition to the site-specific Park River *FLOW* project, the Joseloff Gallery's exhibition *Mary Miss: City as Living Laboratory, Hartford* will present Mary Miss's current *CaLL* projects in Indiana, on Broadway and Staten Island in New York, and in New Dehli, India, as well as a selection of the historical precedent projects that led Mary Miss to develop her current *CaLL* initiative.

*Mary Miss: City as Living Laboratory, Hartford* will tie in with the year-long, watershed-wide campaign presented by Park Water Arts. Spearheaded by Sherry Buckberrough, associate professor of art history at the University of Hartford, and Mary Rickel Pelletier, Director of the Park River Watershed Revitalization Initiative, the Park Water Arts eco-festival aims to connect art and environmental issues. Prior to the opening of *Mary Miss: City as Living Laboratory, Hartford*, the Joseloff Gallery will join Park Water Arts and several components of the University of Hartford, including The President's College, Mortensen Library; the College of Arts and Sciences, Hillyer College; the Art History Department; and the Maurice Greenberg Center for Judiac Studies in presenting a full-day symposium titled *Water on Our Doorstep* focusing on the history, present, and future of the Park River. This event will take place on World Water Day, March 22, 2011. Its finale will be an evening presentation by Mary Miss.

Preceding the opening of *Mary Miss: City as Living Laboratory, Hartford* on Thursday, April 21, 2011, a panel discussion will take place in Wilde Auditorium from 2:00-3:30pm featuring a group of local artists, scientists, and thinkers discussing the topic of how scientific information can convey content through imagery. Sherry Buckberrough, associate professor of art history at the University of Hartford, will moderate the panel.

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### ***Mary Miss: City as Living Laboratory, Hartford***

#### **Exhibition Dates:**

April 22, 2011 through May 29, 2011

#### **Opening Reception:**

Thursday, April 21, 2011, 5-7pm, Joseloff Gallery

#### **Panel Discussion:**

Thursday, April 21, 2011, 2-3:30pm, Wilde Auditorium

#### **Other Events:**

World Water Day Symposium: *Water on Our Doorstep*

Tuesday, March 22, 2011, 9:30am-5:30pm, Wilde Auditorium

Mary Miss Lecture: *Ecological Perspectives*

Tuesday, March 22, 2011, 7:30-9:00pm, Wilde Auditorium

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#### **About Mary Miss:**

Known for her environmentally based artwork, Mary Miss lives and works in New York City. She has reshaped the boundaries between sculpture, architecture, landscape design, and installation art by articulating a vision of the public sphere where it is possible for an artist to address the issues of our time. Social, cultural and environmental sustainability are the focus of installations that allow the visitor to become aware of local history, ecology or other aspects of

the site that have gone unnoticed. Miss has collaborated closely with architects, planners, engineers, ecologists and public administrators on diverse projects from creating a temporary memorial around the perimeter of Ground Zero to revealing the history of the Union Square Subway station in New York. A recipient of multiple awards, Miss has participated in exhibitions at the Harvard University Art Museum, Brown University Gallery, The Institute of Contemporary Art in London, the Architectural Association in London, Harvard University's Graduate School of Design and the Des Moines Art Center.

**About Joseloff Gallery:**

The Joseloff Gallery is located in the Harry Jack Gray Center on the campus of the University of Hartford. The mission of the Joseloff Gallery is to enhance the studio programs at the Hartford Art School through the creation of exhibitions focusing on a wide range of contemporary art in all media. In doing so, its programs utilize the entire university community and foster a greater understanding and enjoyment of contemporary art throughout the region. The Joseloff Gallery exhibition program is designed to explore concepts, issues, and directions in contemporary art, while reinforcing the power, richness and diversity of visual language. Exhibitions are funded through the Kohn/Joseloff Foundation and private endowments, as well as corporate, government, and individual contributions. For more information, please visit [www.joseloffgallery.org](http://www.joseloffgallery.org).

**About Park Water Arts:**

In partnership with the Park River Watershed Revitalization Initiative, Park Water Arts works to coordinate a distinct network of art actions and events that draw attention to the history, present condition, and future design of the Park River watershed in central Connecticut. Its events enrich public awareness of the relation of art, landscape, and urban design to water quality and cultural sustainability. The growth of Park Water Arts is supported by various arts, cultural, and educational organizations throughout the watershed.

**About The Park River Watershed Revitalization Initiative:**

The Park River Watershed Revitalization Initiative is an ad hoc network of citizen activists, scientists, engineers, design professionals, and government and non-profit advisors who are working to improve the water quality within the Park River watershed. The challenge of protecting and restoring nature within a high-density urban environment involves both the raising of awareness and the planning and implementation of projects by private and public property owners throughout the watershed area. The Park River Watershed Revitalization Initiative is a project of The Farmington River Watershed Association, which has been the guardian and champion of the Farmington River and its watershed since its inception in 1953. A primary goal of The Park River Watershed Revitalization Initiative is to expand public awareness about the boundaries of the Park River Watershed, educate watershed residents about the relationships between upstream and downstream areas of our watershed, and expose the impact of urban development and lifestyle habits on nature.

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