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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### ***Banned & Recovered: Artists Respond to Censorship***

an exhibition at two venues:

**San Francisco Center for the Book**, Aug. 15-Nov. 26, 2008

**African American Museum and Library at Oakland**, Sept. 5-Dec. 31

public receptions:

**San Francisco Center for the Book**, Fri., Aug. 15, 6-8pm

**African American Museum and Library at Oakland**, Fri., Sept. 5, 6-8pm

*It's not just the books under fire now that worry me. It is the books that will never be written. The books that will never be read. And all due to the fear of censorship.*

—Judy Blume, children's book author

**June 30, 2008, San Francisco, CA**—In a first-time collaboration, the **San Francisco Center for the Book (SFCB)** and the **African American Museum and Library at Oakland (AAMLO)** are presenting the exhibit ***Banned and Recovered: Artists Respond to Censorship***, opening August 15 in San Francisco and September 5 in Oakland.

The exhibit, curated by **Hanna Regev**, features work from more than 50 artists working in a variety of media. With each artist interpreting a censored text of their choice, the project provides a unique forum for visual artists to respond to the suppression of literary art. The exhibit, with different work on display at each location, will run through November 26 in San Francisco and December 31 in Oakland. Participating artists include **Enrique Chagoya, Sandow Birk, Mildred Howard, Emory Douglas, Naomie Kremer** and many others.

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***Banned and Recovered*** is timed to coincide with **Banned Books Week** (September 27-October 3), an annual event sponsored by the **American Library Association (ALA)**. **Banned Books Week** began in 1982 as a response to challenges and threats posed to intellectual freedom in the United States. According to **Steve Woodall**, SFCB artistic director, "As an organization dedicated to free artistic expression and the future of the book as a work of art, we're delighted to be co-hosting this exhibition. In an election year, with the future of the Supreme Court at stake, it is particularly timely, and AAMLO has proved to be an ideal partner in this undertaking."

Books that have been suppressed constitute a shockingly wide selection, ranging from colonial-era novels to acknowledged contemporary classics – books such as *Fanny Hill*, *Tom Sawyer*, *The Color Purple*, and the Harry Potter novels. "What's most troubling," says AAMLO chief curator **Rick Moss**, "is how arbitrary the process is. In keeping with the missions of our two organizations, we all felt this was the most thought-provoking and appropriate way to explore this issue, while dovetailing with the ALA's 2008 theme 'free people read freely.'"

**Hanna Regev** offers the curatorial view: "Collectively, the work initiates an important undertaking—the recovery of fragments of our censored history. We felt that the pairing of visual and graphic artists with these banned and threatened books was a natural one. After all, what better group to interpret suppressed works than visual artists, who are already so attuned to the threat of censorship. The show is a powerful reminder of the fragility of our freedoms, many of which are being chipped away by the Patriot Act. It is a powerful testament to the irrepressible creative spirit."

Several public programs have been designed specifically for the exhibit, addressing a variety of topics. A complete list of programs, dates and venues will be available soon.

The exhibition is supported in part by the **San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund Grants for the Arts**, the **Book Club of California** and individual donors.

Program support has been provided by the **Oakland Public Library**, the **Friends of the Oakland Public Library**, the **San Francisco Public Library**, and the **Mills College Center for the Book**.

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**The San Francisco Center for the Book (SFCB)** is devoted to teaching and fostering the joys of books and bookmaking—their history, artistry, continuing presence in our culture and their enduring importance as a medium of self-expression.

**San Francisco Center for the Book**  
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**The African American Museum and Library at Oakland (AAMLO)** is dedicated to the discovery, preservation, interpretation and sharing of the historical and cultural experiences of African Americans in California and the West for present and future generations.

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**Hanna Regev** works with many Bay Area cultural organizations and art galleries, producing public programs in history, art, and museum practice. Regev serves on the board of the First Amendment Project, and is a past president of the Northern California Council of the National Museum of Women in the Arts.