

For Immediate Release

## **The Kitchen presents (*The efflorescence of*) *Walter*, an exhibition by Ralph Lemon**

New York, NY, April 17, 2007 – The Kitchen is pleased to present the first New York solo exhibition by choreographer, dancer, and visual artist **Ralph Lemon**. Titled (*The efflorescence of*) *Walter*, the show includes a body of work focused on the American South, featuring works-on-paper, a multiple-channel video installation, and other sculptural elements that explore history, memory, and memorialization. There will be an opening reception for the exhibition at **The Kitchen (512 West 19<sup>th</sup> Street)** on **Friday, May 11 from 6-8pm**. Curated by **Claire Tancons** and **Anthony Allen**, the exhibition will be on view from **May 11 – June 23, 2007**. The Kitchen's gallery hours are **Tuesday-Friday, 12 to 6pm** and **Saturday, 11am to 6pm**. Admission is **Free**.

(*The efflorescence of*) *Walter* revolves around Lemon's collaborative relationship with **Walter Carter**, an African American man who has lived for almost a century in Yazoo City, Mississippi. Since 2002, Lemon and Carter have met twice a year and created a "collaborative meta-theater" in which actions scripted by Lemon are translated and transformed through Carter's performance and improvisations. The exhibition weaves together videos of Walter's actions with paintings, drawings and photographs by Lemon. Bringing together figures as varied as writer James Baldwin, artist Joseph Beuys, and Br'er Rabbit, a central character of African American folktales; as well as historical events from the Civil Rights era and cultural artifacts of the American South, this complex engagement with history, myth, and daily human existence explores how past, present, and future co-exist and at times collide.

The works presented in (*the efflorescence of*) *Walter* are the ongoing results of Lemon's sustained inquiry into the politics of culture and the power and reliability of cultural memory. This inquiry was the original impulse for the monumental *Geography Trilogy* (1995-2004), Lemon's quasi-anthropological exploration of movement across three continents, whose last installment, *Come Home Charley Patton* (2004), specifically addressed the complicated history of the southern United States. Some of the works on view in this exhibition were presented at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, as part of *OPEN-ENDED (the art of engagement)*, in May 2006.

### About the Artist

**Ralph Lemon** has been a vital force in the international dance scene since the early 1980's when he performed with Meredith Monk. A winner of a New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Award both in 1987 and 2005, Lemon has also been the recipient of eight choreographer fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the 2004 NYFA Prize, the 2006 United States Artist Fellow, and in 1999 was honored with the prestigious CalArts Alpert Award in the Arts for Dance. In 1985, he founded the Ralph Lemon Dance Company which, during its ten year life span, was presented by venues such as Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, The Kennedy Center, Brooklyn Academy of Music, and The Joyce Theater. In 1995, Lemon dissolved his company and formed Cross Performance Inc. to explore new forms of presentation and performance, and has produced myriad projects, including the *Geography* trilogy; three books published by

-More

Wesleyan University Press: *Persephone*, *Geography: Art/Race/Exile*, and *Tree: Belief/Culture/Balance*; a film entitled *Three* (1999) created with choreographer Bebe Miller and filmmaker Isaac Julien; and *Mirrors and Smoke*, a DVD collaboration with Philip Mallory Jones, among many others.

### **Funding Credits**

This exhibition is sponsored by Altria Group, Inc. Exhibitions at The Kitchen are made possible with generous support from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency.



### **ABOUT THE KITCHEN**

The Kitchen is one of New York City's oldest nonprofit performance and exhibition spaces, showing experimental work by innovative artists, both emerging and established. Programs range from dance, music, and theatrical performances to video and media arts exhibitions to literary events, film screenings, and artists' talks. Since its inception in 1971, The Kitchen has been a powerful force in shaping the cultural landscape of this country and has helped launch the careers of many artists who have gone on to worldwide prominence.

Box Office Information:  
212.255. 5793 x 11  
Tue-Sat, 2-6pm

The Kitchen  
512 West 19th Street  
New York, NY 10011

#####