Claremont, CA – The Pomona College Museum of Art presents the traveling exhibition “Restoring the Spirit: Celebrating Haitian Art” and the Pomona College Museum of Art permanent collection exhibition “The Shake of a Man in Fever: Haiti’s February Revolution through the Lens of Danny Lyon” on view from Jan. 19 to May 15, 2016. A public reception will take place on Saturday, Jan. 23, 5-7 p.m.
“Restoring the Spirit: Celebrating Haitian Art” is a landmark survey of Haiti’s complex visual traditions from 1940 to the present, a portrait of its artists’ devotion to creative endeavors in the face of national adversity. “Restoring the Spirit: Celebrating Haitian Art” is curated by Rima Girnius, originated by the Figge Art Museum, and toured by Curatorial Assistance, Pasadena, California.

Recent generations of self-taught Haitian artists have invented a distinct style of art-making that reveals traditional values and belief systems. Ranging from vibrant paintings and sequin-covered textiles to sculpture created from reused oil drums and aluminum pans and other found materials, the works put vodou beliefs and practices into a contemporary context, document historical and political events and individuals, and provide details from small town or rural life, gatherings, and celebrations that are essential to Haitian culture. Perhaps most interesting is the critical function that many of these works played for the collective imagination: fantastic paintings of hallucinatory landscapes populated by exotic animals and vibrant culture serve as an escape from the reality of Haiti’s environmental and political woes. Image-making acts as both a removal from reality and a proposal for utopia. An important survey of Haitian art, this exhibition demonstrates that, despite Haiti’s turbulent and often bloody political history, the country developed a flourishing artistic tradition that speaks to the vitality of Haitian culture.

The exhibition “Restoring the Spirit: Celebrating Haitian Art” is accompanied by the symposium The Crossing/La traversée: Art in Haiti and the U.S., presented on March 3 through 5, 2016. The symposium convenes national and international scholars and artists to examine the deep connections between the art and material culture of Haiti and the United States. The keynote speech is by painter, sculptor, and installation artist Edouard Duval-Carrié. The Crossing/La traversée: Art in Haiti and the U.S. is made possible through support from the Terra Foundation for American Art. The symposium is also co-sponsored by the Pomona College Museum of Art, the Pomona College History Department, and the Claremont Graduate University, with funding from the Thornton F. Bradshaw Fund and the Janet Inskeep Benton ’79 Fund for Museum Programming. For more information please see: www.pomona.edu/museum/events/2016/crossingla-traversée-art-haiti-and-us-1915-1986.

“The Shake of a Man in Fever: Haiti’s February Revolution through the Lens of Danny Lyon” presents selections from U.S. photographer Danny Lyon’s series “Merci Gonaïves” drawn from the permanent collection of the Pomona College Museum of Art. This series spans Lyon’s time in Haiti (1983-1986) from his initial role as a brothel photographer to his observation of Haiti’s February Revolution. The exhibition highlights the interplay of routine daily life with revolution and the different versions of life in Haiti. While Lyon was shooting “Merci Gonaïves,” Haiti was in the midst of the February Revolution. Lyon intended the series to challenge mainstream depictions of the Haitian
Revolution in the U.S.; coverage that Lyon claimed took a “single style.” Rather he presents a visually complex and multivalent portrait of a country in the throes of revolution.

Danny Lyon (b. 1942, Brooklyn, New York) is an award-winning documentary photographer and socio-political activist. For more than four decades, he has focused on the freedom struggles of marginalized groups in the U.S. and abroad. His subjects include members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (The Movement, 1964), Texas prison inmates (Conversations with the Dead, 1971), and Indian tribes in the American West (Indian Nations, 2002).

This exhibition is curated by Alexandra Madsen, Curatorial Intern at the Pomona College Museum of Art through the ArtTable Summer Mentored Internship for Diversity in the Visual Arts Program, with funding from the Kress Foundation.

**Museum Information**

The Museum collects, preserves, exhibits and interprets works of art; and houses a substantial permanent collection as well as serving as a gallery of temporary exhibitions. Important holdings include the Kress Collection of 15th- and 16th-century Italian panel paintings; more than 5,000 examples of Pre-Columbian to 20th-century American Indian art and artifacts, including basketry, ceramics and beadwork; and a large collection of American and European prints,
drawings and photographs, including works by Francisco de Goya, José Clemente Orozco, and Rico Lebrun.

ADMISSION
All exhibitions and programs are free of charge and open to the public.

GENERAL INFORMATION
330 North College Avenue
Claremont, CA 91711
Tuesday through Sunday, 12-5 p.m., Closed Mondays
Art After Hours: Thursday, 5-11 p.m., Jan. 21 – Apr. 28, 2016

Art After Hours offers a variety of programming including live music concerts sponsored by KSPC 88.7 FM, lectures, panels, workshops, tours, film screenings, and performances in conjunction with Museum exhibitions.

For more information, please call 909.621.8283 or visit www.pomona.edu/museum.