POMONA COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART
FEATURES NEW PAINTINGS IN
“PROJECT SERIES 42: M.A. PEERS”

“Project Series 42: M.A. Peers” will be on view October 30 through December 19, 2010, at the Pomona College Museum of Art in Claremont. M.A. Peers will discuss her work on Thursday, November 18, at 7 p.m. in the Museum, in a panel hosted by writer and curator Doug Harvey joined by Steve Roden, whose exhibition “Steve Roden: when words become forms” will also be on view. The panel will be followed by a public reception from 8-10 p.m.

For “Project Series 42: M.A. Peers,” the artist is presenting new paintings from two very different bodies of work: abstractions and portraits of whippet dogs. The exhibition is accompanied by a catalog with an essay by Doug Harvey.

For close to two decades, Peers’s work has engaged the process of painting, art history, popular culture, and formal strategies of portraiture. Her paintings and drawings typically combine delicately rendered figures and forms within enigmatic but brilliantly colored fields. Peers often works with subject matter based on a range of cultural icons, including mass-media stereotypes of purebred dogs, Soviet space dogs, and corporate and political figures.

Recently, the grounds in Peers’s figurative works have gradually engulfed their subjects—frequently corporate figures—and the paintings have crossed into pure abstraction. In the new abstract paintings, Peers explores a more unrestrained style of mark making and a more vibrant and varied color and surface. The saturated, luscious fields of color in the resulting non-representational works seem luxuriously, and gorgeously, indulgent.

In the second body of work in “Project Series 42,” Peers tackles issues of pictorial structure and form through portraits of competitive whippets. The new paintings stem from the last four years of her work training and showing whippets. Expanding on her longtime fascination with canine physical structure and design, Peers determined that in order to fully comprehend whippets, she would need to paint them, “to depict them formally, like architectural renderings.” Working from photographs of current top-breed conformation contenders, Peers drew the dogs’ outlines
freehand with paint directly on the paper surface, capturing the structural and formal components of the dogs’ bodies. In the aesthetic world of dog shows and dog breeding, the “look” is often the final arbiter of success, and here Peers has captured the formal relationships of the parts of each dog’s body and the subtle aesthetic differences in each dog’s winning look.

“Project Series 42” is Peers’s first solo museum exhibition. She is represented by Rosamund Felsen Gallery in Santa Monica and has exhibited at the San Jose Museum of Art in San Jose, the Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena, the Museum of Jurassic Technology in Los Angeles, the V. Glouchko Space and Rocket Engineering Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia, and in group exhibitions throughout the United States and Canada.

The Project Series, organized by Museum Senior Curator Rebecca McGrew, presents Southern California artists in focused exhibitions. The purpose of the series is to bring to Pomona College art that is experimental and introduces new forms, techniques or concepts. During each exhibition, participating artists spend time on campus working with faculty and students in relevant disciplines. A catalogue accompanies each exhibition. The Project Series is supported in part by the Pasadena Art Alliance.

The Pomona College Museum of Art is located at 330 N. College Avenue, Claremont. The Museum is open to the public free of charge Tuesday through Friday, from noon to 5 p.m.; Thursday, from noon to 11 p.m.; and Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. For more information, call: (909) 621-8283; email: jessica.wimbley@pomona.edu; or visit the museum’s Website: www.pomona.edu/museum.

The Pomona College Museum of Art houses a substantial permanent collection as well as serving as a gallery for the display 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; and a large collection of American and European prints, drawings, and photographs, including works by Francisco de Goya, José Clemente Orozco and Rico Lebrun.