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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**SOMArts Cultural Center Presents
AT WAR**

*Multimedia exhibition with accompanying performance explores
identities in conflict, February 3–29, 2012*

San Francisco, CA, December 22, 2011— *At War*, curated by and featuring artists Peter Max Lawrence and Truong Tran, February 3 through 29, 2012, explores identities in conflict, ranging from ethnic, gender, and sexual identity to conflicts of artistic identity indicated by disparate processes, practices, and mediums. On display are hundreds of paintings, drawings, videos, and sculptures which incorporate religious elements, assumptive queer histories, and war iconography.

At War is accompanied by a public opening, dance & poetry performance, and closing reception with a critical discussion and Q&A with the curators on February 3, 16, and 25 respectively.

In preparation for the opening reception, Friday, February 3, 6–9pm, Lawrence and Tran initiate war by physically dividing the exhibition space into representational territory with a demilitarized zone line and complete a series of wall and free-standing sculptures utilizing found objects representing the refuses of moral and sexual wars. Dueling audio/visual installations will face off in the gallery annex.

During the accompanying event, *Front Line: War Words & War Dance*, Thursday, February 16, 7–9pm, Lawrence and Tran act as generals or their respective armies comprised of multi-disciplinary Bay Area artists—Rachael Dichter, Rick D’Elia, Jennifer Hasegawa, Carolyn Ho, Philip Huang, Macklin Kowal, Daniel Lichtenberg, Daniel Redman, and Liz Tenuto—who aid in the construction of a larger tableau focused on conflict and collaboration.

Tran, whose aesthetic is organized and contained, engages literary artists to perform on his behalf, while Lawrence, whose aesthetic is chaotic and rampageous, enlists an army of performance artists, including dancers and other practitioners of creative movement. Admission to *Front Line: War Words & War Dance* is a suggested donation of \$5 in advance or \$7 at the door. Advance tickets at <http://atwar.eventbrite.com/>.



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For the month-long exhibition Tran creates a series of sculptural and video installations obscured by physical and optical veils. He conflates historical images of war with an image depicting intimacy between men, and projects video onto a canvas of international symbols of war and peace, such as 1,000 broken wishbones and 1,000 origami cranes folded by a member of his artistic army, poet and visual artist Carolyn Ho.

Tran said, "Vietnamese American artists who have attained some level of success in the art world by Western standards have, by and large, made art about the Vietnam War. If my Vietnamese ethnicity plays a role in my work, it is to challenge this kind of singular narrative; a conscious opposition to the idea of ethnicity as a frame or container. This very thinking is dangerous in that it perpetuates of a single story thereby limiting the creative possibilities of an individual."

Lawrence offers a dense installation composed of a multitude of media and messages that examine both the internal and the external forces that cause one to go to war with the individual persona and challenge perceived cultural and national identities.

At War closes on Saturday, February 25, 7–9pm, with a panel discussion including the authors of essays and criticism about the exhibition, and a question and answer session with the curators.

At War, created by Peter Max Lawrence and Truong Tran, is one of four exhibition proposals selected to receive a 2011–12 Commons Curatorial Residency at SOMArts. Selected artists and curators receive curatorial stipends and a support package valued at over



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\$20,000, as well as access to one of the largest and most beautiful gallery spaces in the heart of the city to expand their practice, engage the Bay Area's cultural communities, and turn vision into reality.

CALENDAR LISTING

Exhibition

At War

February 3–29, 2012. Free admission.

Gallery hours: Tues.–Fri. 12–7pm, Sat. 12–5pm.

www.somarts.org/atwar

Opening Reception & Performance

At War: Peter Max Lawrence & Truong Tran

Friday, February 3, 6–9pm. Free admission.

Poetry & Dance Performance

At The Front Line: War Words & War Dance

Thursday, February 16, 7–9pm. Suggested donation of \$5 in advance, \$7

at the door. Advance tickets: <http://atwar.eventbrite.com/>.

The evening includes poetry and dance by Bay Area artists Rachael Dichter, Rick D'Elia, Jennifer Hasegawa, Carolyn Ho, Philip Huang, Macklin Kowal, Daniel Lichtenberg, Daniel Redman, and Liz Tenuto.

Closing Reception

At Peace: Panel Discussion

Saturday, February 25, 7–9pm. Free admission.

Panelists include Rebekah Edwards and Monica Jane Peck, authors of essays and criticism on *At War*, and contributing video artist Daniel Lichtenberg, Tran's artistic collaborator. The discussion is followed by a Q&A session with curators Peter Max Lawrence and Truong Tran.

ABOUT SOMARTS CULTURAL CENTER

SOMArts (South of Market Arts, Resources, Technology, and Services) was founded in 1979 and operates the South of Market Cultural Center, one of four city-owned cultural facilities in San Francisco.

SOMArts supports exhibitions, performances, classes and other collaborations that serve its mission: to promote and nurture art on the community level and foster an appreciation of and respect for all cultures.

For more information about upcoming events, space rentals and technical services, visit www.somarts.org or call 415-863-1414. SOMArts programs are supported by the San Francisco Arts Commission's Community Arts and Education Program, with funding from Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund and The San Francisco Foundation.