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FOOD FOR THOUGHT CHARITY DINNER AT OHIO STATE AND WEXNER CENTER

Ann Hamilton and Michael Mercil, artists and faculty members at The Ohio State University Department of Art, are organizing a fundraising event and dinner for the Mid-Ohio Foodbank - *Operation Feed Campaign*. The event — known as *Food For Thought*— will begin at 6 pm Monday, May 21, at the Wexner Center for the Arts, 1871 N. High Street at Ohio State.

The dinner of bean soup and light spring fare will be catered by Cameron Mitchell Restaurants, which recently opened Cam's on Campus, a cafe located on the lower level of the Wexner Center. Charge to attend the charity dinner event is \$50/plate; tickets are available ahead of time by calling (614) 292-3535 or TTY/TDD (614) 292-1210.

Following dinner is an 8 pm screening of the award-winning 2006 documentary film: *Our Daily Bread* described by *The Nation* as "the *2001: A Space Odyssey* of food production." Dinner-goers and the general public are welcome to attend the screening in the Wexner Film/Video Theater; admission is a donation of any canned or packaged and sealed, non-perishable food.

In addition to dinner and the movie, the evening also features entertainment by The Embodied Knowledge Ensemble—an arts group formed of students currently participating in Hamilton and Mercil's Living Culture Initiative.

Food For Thought is the second project of a unique OSU campus partnership between The Living Culture Initiative in the Department of Art; The Social Responsibility Initiative in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences and the Wexner Center for the Arts. Their first project together was "The Beanfield," a 500 square foot demonstration plot at the Wexner Center planted in homage to the land-grant mission of The Ohio State University.

ABOUT THE BEANFIELD

The 650-square-foot *Beanfield* is visible from College Road, just across from the Oval, outside on the western edge of the Wexner Center. "It's important that we're here, overlooking the symbolic center of campus," Mercil says. "It places this project in relationship with the life of the campus as it passes by every day."

ABOUT THE LIVING CULTURE INITIATIVE

The Living Culture Initiative will be an ongoing series of projects coming out of the Department of Art that reflects the founding of OSU as a land-grant college with a curriculum of the "agricultural, mechanical, and liberal arts." Mercil and his partner Ann Hamilton (also on the faculty of Ohio State)

launched this initiative to highlight the university's role as a producer of culture (as well as agriculture). "We asked, 'How might the Department of Art generate a more grounded awareness of the university as a model of and for culture at large?'," Mercil says. *The Beanfield* is the first concrete project coming out of this initiative.

ABOUT MICHAEL MERCIL

An associate professor in the Department of Art at Ohio State, Mercil has also been a visiting artist or lecturer at, among other institutions, Virginia Commonwealth University, the Minneapolis College of Art & Design Institute for Public Art, Harvard University Graduate School of Design, and Antioch College. Mercil's artwork has been included in both solo and group exhibitions around the country, including the Fabric Work and Museum in Philadelphia, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Grinnell College in Iowa (an exhibition reflecting that state's farming heritage), and, earlier this year, the Columbus Museum of Art. He recently completed a piece for the newly renovated Ohio Stadium recruiting lounge, and he has an exhibition forthcoming at the Aronoff Center in Cincinnati this November through January—stone sculptures that will also be on view at the Socrates Sculpture Park in New York City. Currently, Mercil is working with artist (and partner) Ann Hamilton and landscape architect Michael Van Valkenburgh on projects for Battery Park City in New York City. They also worked together on the award-winning design for the Fort Duquesne Boulevard Park in downtown Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Mercil was an NEA Artist Design Fellow in the Department of Public Works in the City of Saint Paul.

For more on the partnering departments, visit wexarts.org, arts.osu.edu, and sri.osu.edu.

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