

For Immediate Release:

January 31, 2007

The Museum of Florida Art (DeLand) Presents: Chris Cruz – The Botticelli of the Bike

The Art of Chrome and Leather exhibit, residing in both the upper and lower galleries, presents the phantasmagorical art of the bike, including the air brush sorcery of DeLand's own Chris Cruz; the photography of Daytona's Mark Scharf; a retrospective on bike racing featuring Billy "Ace" Meyers and the Halifax Historical Society's vintage images of racing on the sands of Daytona Beach from the 1920s through the 1950s. The exhibit is open from February 23rd to March 11, 2007. **The Chrome & Leather Bash** takes place at the Museum on Friday March 2nd from 7:00 PM to 11:00 pm with festive food, drinks, music and fun. The dress code is jeans, leather! **The West Side Ride** on March 4th begins at Daytona USA at 8:00 AM, with Sheriff Ben Johnson leading, wends its way through scenic West Volusia and ends at the Museum of Florida Art with music and barbecue. Non-riders can join in for the food and fun at the museum for a \$10.00 fee.

The Airbrush Wizardry of Chris Cruz

February 23rd to March 11th

Raised in Virginia, Chris Cruz came to DeLand when his family moved here in 1986, but not before establishing a reputation as both a fine arts portraitist as well as a commercial artist.

Chris Cruz, however, is best known for his airbrush work on motorcycles, an artistic interest that arises from his boyhood love of two-wheeled speed that led to a National Championship in motocross racing. Nevertheless, his early career centered on commissioned portraits in oil or pastels. Many of his early portraits are on permanent display at the Center for Judicial Studies in Washington, D.C. and include Supreme Court Justices and President Ronald Reagan.

Cruz recalls that his career as an artist began in the 2nd grade when his teacher gave the class the assignment to draw a tree. Unlike his peers and their lollipop renderings, the young Cruz drew a tree with 200 leaves. His "tree period" continued for several years, winning the "Keep Virginia Green" poster contest 3 years in a row against the competition of over 14,000 entries.

As the most celebrated decorator of motorcycles and other motor vehicles (including the historical tour buses for the City of St. Augustine), Cruz is well established in the field. His work has been featured in a host of motorcycle magazines including *Barnetts*, *American Iron*, *Low Rider*, *Hot Bikes* and others. The Cruz artistry has also been applied

to power boats and racing cars, motor coaches, trailers, aircraft, cars, trucks and even the motorcycle helmet.

The featured bikes at this year's Chrome and Leather Bash include Flashback (the Vietnam trike) Bombshell and Bravest and Chris Cruz will be there to meet and greet, so if you have something on wheels that you would like to have painted by the master, drop by his DeLand studio – and bring plenty of cash.

Those desiring to join our Chrome and Leather mailing list can send an e-mail to info@delandmuseum.com, requesting same. Proceeds benefit ART FOR KIDS; providing creative opportunities for Central Florida Youth.

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Museum Hours:

Tuesday - Saturday 10-4

Sunday 1-4

Closed Monday

Non-Member Admission \$3.00 Children under 12 Free

Sundays Free

Tours can be scheduled for groups of 10 or more. Youth tours are free.

The Museum of Florida Art offers a venue where:

- *creativity is fostered.*
- *appreciation of art is nurtured.*
- *all people are welcomed.*

The mission of The Museum of Florida Art is to integrate exhibitions and education to create an enriching and stimulating experience for a diverse audience. The Museum of Florida Art offers a venue for emerging and established Florida artists to support the cultural legacy of our state.