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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Major Retrospective Show from Depression Era Artist at The BCA Center

Burlington, VT: (June 9, 2011) Burlington City Arts is pleased to announce a major retrospective exhibition opening on the Second Floor of the BCA Center on Church Street in Burlington, Friday, June 24<sup>th</sup> from 5-8pm with a reception and talk. *Lewis Rubenstein: Legacy*, is an exciting look at the career of Lewis Rubenstein, a one-time Vermonter, Harvard graduate, and artist whose career spanned seven decades. This exhibition runs from June 24<sup>th</sup>, through August 13<sup>th</sup> at the BCA Center, and will take place on the entire Second Floor of The Center. A catalogue of Rubenstein's work created specifically for this show will be available for purchase during the opening event and throughout the exhibition.

In *Lewis Rubenstein: Legacy*, the BCA Center is thrilled to show three distinct bodies of work covering Lewis Rubenstein's artistic career spanning seventy years. In the watercolor on paper works of the *Art of the 1930's*, he documents the lives of the working class. The swirling, luminescent abstract ink on paper of the 1980's *Creation Series* makes innovative use of the water-based Japanese sumi-e painting technique. Finally, the Vermont paintings capture, in a variety of mediums, the environment of his later years until his death in Shelburne, Vermont in 2003.

Lewis Rubenstein was born and raised in Buffalo, New York. In January 1937, at the height of the Great Depression, Lewis Rubenstein was a young fresco painter and recent Harvard graduate, living in Massachusetts. Following a major mural commission at Harvard's Fogg Museum, Rubenstein set out cross-country in hopes of "seeing real life in America." After experiencing the turmoil of the Bethlehem Steel strikes, he traveled to the copper mining town of Jerome, Arizona

filling his sketchbooks with the details of the miner's lives and struggles. Later these sketchbooks would form the basis of *Mining Town* [1949], the first of Rubenstein's highly dramatic and uniquely original artistic form: the *Time Painting*, horizontal scrolls painted on linen and viewed in a wooden frame. From there, Rubenstein traveled to the San Francisco waterfront documenting the shipyards and dockworkers. These works powerfully capture the strength, dignity and fortitude of the working class.

In 1946, Rubenstein resided in Poughkeepsie, New York where he taught at Vassar College. During his time at Vassar, Lewis was a contemporary and close friend of Edwin Land, the founder of Polaroid and the prestigious American artist, Rico Lebrun. Rico and Lewis studied with the same fresco master in Italy. In 1993, Rubenstein "retired" to Vermont where he continued to work until his death in 2003.

In an excerpt from the catalogue accompanying this exhibition, Daniel Rubenstein, Co-Steward of the Lewis William Rubenstein Legacy Collection, says about his father, "Lewis was a human being who was compelled to observe and reflect what he saw in his art. He chose a wide variety of media – murals, frescoes, oils, watercolors, ink paintings, lithographs and *Time Paintings*. He also recorded family life and faculty meetings in humorous sketches. His art reflects the quality of the man – warm, insightful, reflective and peaceful. The art he created in the 1930's are strong testament to his belief in the inherent dignity and worth of each individual – miners, steel workers, ordinary people and protesters in the Hunger March in Washington. His murals in the Harvard Museum of Art, the Busch Reisinger, were powerful warnings against fascism. His spirit and his art are a legacy to the communities where he lived and to his family."

*Lewis Rubenstein: Legacy* is an important part of Burlington City Arts, celebrating 30 years of supporting the arts, 1981-2011, which is dedicated to the promotion of excellence, experimentation, and education in all forms of contemporary art. This exhibition is sponsored by The Haas Group at Merrill Lynch, the Rubenstein family, the Morrow family, Champlain College, Michael Metz and Denise Shekerjian and an anonymous donor. The 2011 exhibition year is underwritten by Free Press Media. Opening events are generously donated by Catering By Dale. For more information about gallery exhibitions, special events, classes and workshops, please call 802.865.7166 or visit [BURLINGTONCITYARTS.ORG](http://BURLINGTONCITYARTS.ORG).

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