New York, September 19, 2007 – PERFORMA 07, the second biennial of new visual art performance, will be held in New York City from October 27-November 20, 2007. Featuring over eighty artists presented in collaboration with a consortium of fifty key cultural organizations throughout the city, including the Guggenheim Museum, the Kitchen, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, China Institute, and The Studio Museum in Harlem, PERFORMA 07 promises an exciting three weeks of innovative cultural programming for New York City and the international world of contemporary art and visual art performance. The final list of participants will be made public in late September.

Celebrated Italian artist, Francesco Vezzoli is one of ten featured artists commissioned to create a new work especially for PERFORMA 07. For his first ever live performance, Vezzoli will present a restaging of Cosi’ e (se vi pare,) or Right You Are (If You Think You Are), the renowned play by the Italian Nobel Laureate, Luigi Pirandello in the rotunda of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

Written and produced in 1917, Pirandello’s timeless work examines the fundamental ambiguity of truth, and the seductive powers of language in conjuring up a female character who may never actually appear amongst the actors on stage as they obsessively dissect her attributes and identity. Rumor and celebrity mongering become the substitute for a deeply examined life, and Pirandello, as does Vezzoli in his own art, points to these empty vessels
as a means of drawing attention to existential and humanist concerns.

An extraordinary cast of top-billed actors have responded to Vezzoli’s visionary approach to Pirandello’s jewel of a work, Right You Are (If You Think You Are) that implicates the audience in its examination of celebrity, and that points also to the relativity of truth, the necessity of illusion, and the instability of the human persona. The performance is a PERFORMA Commission produced by Gagosian Gallery.

“‘As Caligula is to Hollywood, so Pirandello is to PERFORMA,’ was the way that Francesco Vezzoli described this piece to me a year ago, when discussing his PERFORMA Commission, and referring to his earlier film. He then went on to give a precis of Pirandello’s play, making me realize there is no better auteur to present this work -- about the ineffability of fame and fortune -- in New York for the first time. It is absolutely of our times, and it perfectly reflects Francesco’s own obsessions,” says PERFORMA Founder and Director RoseLee Goldberg. “He also said it will be his only performance ever, which I know won’t be true, since he’s having such a great time making it. And that’s another wonderful outcome of the PERFORMA Commission, to suggest entirely new directions for the artist.”

Nancy Spector, Chief Curator of the Guggenheim Museum, said, "We are very pleased to present Francesco Vezzoli’s production of Right You Are if You Think You Are in collaboration with the 2007 PERFORMA Biennial. It promises to be a surprising and memorable event, much in keeping with Francesco's impressively provocative practice. His transformation of the museum's rotunda into a dynamic, theatrical setting continues our own long-standing tradition of inviting artists to create dramatic interventions in the space." Right You Are if You Think You Are will premiere at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum as a part of PERFORMA07 on October 27, 2007. Please see the biennial schedule for more details.

Other recipients of PERFORMA Commissions for the 2007 biennial are Carlos Amorales, Sanford Biggers, Nathalie Djurberg, Japanther, Isaac Julien, Daria Martin, Kelly Nipper, Adam Pendleton and Yvonne Rainer. The PERFORMA Commissions program originates new performance by inviting artists, many of whom have not worked ‘live’ before, to create work especially for the PERFORMA biennial. Selected by PERFORMA Director RoseLee Goldberg, commissioned artists work closely with the PERFORMA production team from conceptualization to presentation, including international tours following the biennial.

PERFORMA is a non-profit multidisciplinary arts organization dedicated to exploring the critical role of live performance in the history of twentieth century art and to encouraging new directions in performance for the twenty-first century. PERFORMA Commissions are supported by the Toby Devan Lewis Philanthropic Fund, the Andy Warhol Foundation for
the Visual Arts, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, The Greenwall Foundation and the PERFORMA Producer’s Circle. Francesco Vezzoli is represented by Gagosian Gallery, New York.

For more information on the *PERFORMA Commissions* and PERFORMA 07, please visit www.performa-arts.org.

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