Phil Collins: the world won’t listen
Number 52 in the Dallas Museum of Art’s Concentrations series

November 9, 2007–March 23, 2008
Marguerite and Robert Hoffman Galleries

This Dallas Museum of Art premieres British artist Phil Collins’ completed three-part video installation the world won’t listen. Filmed in Colombia, Turkey, and Indonesia, the video trilogy features fans of the influential British indie-rock band The Smiths performing karaoke versions of tracks from their 1987 compilation album The World Won’t Listen. Along with the first-ever public presentation of Collins’ completed trilogy, the Dallas exhibition will also include a series of works based on letters that Morrissey, the band’s iconic lead singer, wrote as a teenager to London music weeklies.

On view through March 23, 2008, Phil Collins: the world won’t listen is curated by Suzanne Weaver, the Museum’s Nancy and Tim Hanley Associate Curator of Contemporary Art. The exhibition will debut as an expanded presentation of Concentrations, a special DMA series of project-based solo exhibitions by international emerging artists.

“We are extremely pleased to present Phil Collins’ completed video trilogy for its first public viewing,” said John R. Lane, The Eugene McDermott Director of the Dallas Museum of Art. “This exhibition is a testament to how in the past ten years Suzanne Weaver has pushed our Concentrations series to a new level of ambition and experimentation, where emerging artistic talents are offered the opportunity to have their first major museum presentation or, as in Collins’ video installation, to have a large-scale premiere of their newest work.”

A 2006 finalist for the Tate Museum’s Turner Prize, Collins uses video and photography to engage with people in places marked by political, social, and cultural turmoil and change such as Belgrade, San Sebastián, Baghdad, and Ramallah. He first began work on the world won’t listen in 2004, producing a fully functioning karaoke machine and shooting the first chapter of his three-part video installation in Bogotá, Colombia. The second part took place in Istanbul, Turkey, and was included in the 9th International Istanbul Biennial, and the third, which will be on view for the first time in Dallas, was filmed in Jakarta and Bandung, Indonesia.

For each chapter, Collins spent extended periods of time researching, lecturing, building sets, and filming, with the filming followed by an intensive and extensive editing period. He went on television and radio, visited dance clubs, and posted flyers throughout each city, inviting participants to come and perform their favorite songs from The World Won’t Listen.

“In this poignant and poetic work, Collins insightfully combines art, pop music, and popular culture to create a tender, heartbreaking, and at times funny portrait of humanity,” said Weaver. “Watching these Smiths fans—an almost cultlike world phenomenon—perform and sing their favorite lyrics by lead singer Morrissey in a language not their own is a moving reminder of our own desires and struggles for individual
expression. It also expands the possibilities of art in our rapidly changing global age."

Born in 1970 in Runcorn, England, and currently based in Glasgow, Scotland, Phil Collins earned his B.A. at the University of Manchester and received his M.F.A. from the University of Ulster, School of Art & Design, Belfast. His work has been the focus of recent exhibitions at the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh (March 2007), the San Francisco Museum of Art (September 2006), and the Tate Britain (March 2006). Collins is represented by the Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York, the Victoria Miro Gallery, London, and the Kerlin Gallery, Dublin. He received a Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award for Visual Arts in 2001. In 2006 Collins was shortlisted for the Turner Prize, a contemporary art award widely recognized as one of the most important and prestigious awards for the visual arts in Europe.

As Turner Prize Judge Andrew Renton said, “To call Phil Collins a prankster would be to underestimate the seriousness of his work. His work is clearly political and connected to social engagement.” The DMA’s Weaver adds, “From a dance marathon, to a karaoke session, to a press conference, Collins’ work explores culture’s mediating power and how it can help both fulfill and limit individual expression.”

Exhibition Catalogue
The accompanying 128-page illustrated exhibition catalogue will offer a valuable contribution to and critical look at Collins’ work and will further scholarship in the fields of popular music, cultural studies, and art history. It will include essays by British music critic Simon Reynolds, on the seductive power of The Smiths and Morrissey; Bruce Hainley, writer and contributing editor of Artforum, on the political implications of the world won’t listen; Liz Kotz, Assistant Professor in Comparative Literature at the University of California, Riverside, on the aesthetic and art history context to the artist’s work; and exhibition curator Suzanne Weaver in conversation with the artist on his background, motivating ideas, and artistic process.

About Concentrations
Concentrations began in 1981 as part of the Dallas Museum of Art’s commitment to the work of living artists, with the goal of making the work of contemporary artists accessible to Dallas Museum of Art audiences while preserving the excitement of the work.

Concentrations exhibition support is provided by the Donor Circle membership program through leadership gifts of Claire Dewar, Nancy and Tim Hanley, and Cindy and Howard Rachofsky. Previous Concentrations artists include American artist Doug Aitken (in 1999), winner of the 1999 International Prize at the Venice Biennale, and Albanian artist Anri Sala (in 2002), shortlisted in 2002 for the Guggenheim Museum’s Hugo Boss Prize.

Phil Collins: the world won’t listen is organized by the Dallas Museum of Art.

Exhibition support is provided by the Contemporary Art Fund through the gifts of an anonymous donor, Arlene and John Dayton, Laura and Walter Elcock, Amy and Vernon
Faulconer, Kenny Goss and George Michael, Nancy and Tim Hanley, Marguerite Hoffman, Suzanne and Patrick McGee, Allen and Kelli Questrom, Cindy and Howard Rachofsky, Deedie and Rusty Rose, Gayle and Paul Stoffel, and Sharon and Michael Young. Publication of the exhibition catalogue was underwritten in part by Gayle and Paul Stoffel.

This exhibition is number 52 in the Concentrations series, support for which is provided by Lincoln Property Company and the Donor Circle membership program through leadership gifts of Gail and Dan Cook, Claire Dewar, Nancy and Tim Hanley, Caren Prothro, and Cindy and Howard Rachofsky. Air transportation provided by American Airlines.

Image: Phil Collins, the world won’t listen, 2007, © 2007 Phil Collins, still photo courtesy of the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery