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**CONTACT:**

Jessica Naresh

HEMPHILL Fine Arts

1515 14th Street NW

Washington, DC 20005

202.234.5601

[jessica@hemphillfinearts.com](mailto:jessica@hemphillfinearts.com)



EDUARDO DEL VALLE & MIRTA GÓMEZ, FROM THE GROUND UP: GLOBE, 1998, C-PRINT, 20" X 24", ED. 10

**Economy of Scale, November 7 - December 23, 2009**

Washington DC – Hemphill Fine Arts opens *Economy of Scale*, a group photography exhibition, on November 7, 2009. A public reception will be held on Wednesday, November 11, from 6:30–8:30pm. The exhibition will remain on view through December 23, 2009.

Is bigger better? Is smaller intimate and, therefore, precious? Does a particular size better serve the content of a photograph?

During the exponential growth of the fine art photography market in the 1980s, there were conversations among a few photography dealers concerning strategies to bring photography into parity with painting. The goal was for photography to command the full regard of art collectors. In the most blatant sense, this was a real estate issue: “Should not a photograph claim significant wall space in the manner of a painting?” Photography needed to achieve an architectural presence. Technical advances in the printing of large-scale photographic prints soon began to fulfill the ambition of attaining a comparable size in relation to painting. Today’s photographers can create near mural-size works with the ever-advancing technology of digital printing. As photography enlarged in size from the mid-1980s to the present, it migrated from showing in a handful of galleries that specialized in photography to hanging in most contemporary art galleries. Now that photography successfully competes for wall space with painting, we ask, “How has this achievement of scale benefited the medium and its attendant messages?”

The phrase “economy of scale” refers to a reduction in unit cost as the scale of production increases to match or predict rising consumption. In the strictest sense, this could only apply to photographic prints if dealers and photographers lowered the price per print of a particular image as demand increased. Thus far, this has not been the case. The title *Economy of Scale* is more poetic than literal. Our purpose is to raise questions about the size of the photographic print, as well as present evidence of the impact of economies of scale upon our lives. The exhibition is comprised of photographic prints that express the scale of their subjects and photographs that illustrate the political implications and environmental impact of economies of scale. The exhibition includes both historic and contemporary photographs, including works by:

Anonymous, David Burnett, David Byrne & Danielle Spencer, Colby Caldwell, William Christenberry, Frank Day, Carl De Keyzer, Eduardo Del Valle & Mirta Gómez, Margaret Bourke-White, Robert Frank, William Greiner, Graciela Iturbide, Erich Hartmann, Max Hirshfeld, Franz Jantzen, Ralph Morse, Lothar Osterburg, Shelly Rusten, Sebastião Salgado, Susannah Sayler/The Canary Project, William C. ShROUT, Ruth Thorne-Thomsen, Darryl Vance

*Economy of Scale* coincides with FotoWeekDC, November 7-14, 2009, a citywide celebration of photography. FotoweekDC is comprised of exhibitions in commercial galleries, non-profit spaces, and museums, including seven international exhibitions, photographic light projections, newly published photography books, lectures, awards, interactive photography projects, and cameras for kids. *Economy of Scale* and FotoWeekDC provide an unequalled opportunity to experience the best the medium has to offer. Visit [www.fotoweekdc.org](http://www.fotoweekdc.org) for further information.

**GALLERY HOURS**

Tuesday - Saturday, 10 AM to 5 PM and by appointment.

IMAGES ARE AVAILABLE FOR REPRODUCTION.

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