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For downloadable images, visit pbs.org/pressroom

For the program companion website, visit pbs.org/independentlens/herb-and-dorothy

**Megumi Sasaki's HERB & DOROTHY to Kick Off Eighth Season of
the Emmy® Award-winning PBS Series *Independent Lens*
on Tuesday, October 13th at 10PM**

*The Incredible True Story of the New York Postal Worker and Librarian Who Amassed One of the Largest
and Most Important Collections of Contemporary American Art*

(San Francisco, CA)—Do you have to be a Medici or a Rockefeller to collect art? Not according to Herb and Dorothy Vogel. As the series opener for the 2009/2010 season of PBS's acclaimed *Independent Lens*, Megumi Sasaki's delightful documentary HERB AND DOROTHY tells the extraordinary story of Herb, a high school dropout and postal clerk, and Dorothy, a librarian. Living in a humble, one-bedroom New York apartment, this seemingly ordinary couple turned out to have a keen eye and all-consuming passion for modern art that led them to amass one of the most important contemporary art collections in history. **HERB & DOROTHY** will air nationally on *Independent Lens* on Tuesday, October 13, 2009 at 10PM (check local listings).

In the early 1960s, when very little attention was being paid to Minimalist and Conceptual Art, Herb and Dorothy quietly began purchasing the works of unknown artists. Devoting all of Herb's salary to buying art, and living solely on Dorothy's paycheck, they collected art guided by only two rules: the piece had to be affordable and small enough to fit in their cramped apartment. Within these limitations, they proved themselves to be curatorial visionaries; most of the artists they supported and befriended went on to become world-renowned. But they did more than just purchase art: they became major fixtures on the New York art scene, spending every evening at gallery openings and museum shows and becoming close friends with many of the artists they admired. Their circle of intimates includes Sol LeWitt, Christo and Jeanne-Claude, Richard Tuttle, Chuck Close, Robert and Sylvia Mangold, Lynda Benglis, Pat Steir, Robert Barry, Lucio Pozzi, Lawrence Weiner and many others who are featured in the film.

By the early 1990s, the Vogels had managed to accumulate over 4,000 pieces, filling every corner of their living space from the bathroom to the kitchen, floor to ceiling. "Not even a toothpick could be squeezed into the apartment," recalls Dorothy. The place was bursting at the seams and something had to be done.

The Vogels soon made headlines that shocked the art world: their entire collection was moved to the National Gallery of Art, the vast majority of it as an outright gift to the institution. Many of the works they had acquired at modest prices had appreciated so significantly that their collection became worth several million dollars—yet the Vogels never sold a single piece of the collection.

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Today, still in love with each other and with art, Herb and Dorothy live in the same apartment, with their pet turtles, fish, and cat. The once completely emptied space is again filled with piles of artworks.

To learn more about the film, visit the companion website for **HERB & DOROTHY** at pbs.org/herb-and-dorothy. Get detailed information on the film, watch preview clips, read an interview with the filmmaker, and explore the subject in depth with links and resources. The site also features a Talkback section for viewers to share their ideas and opinions.

On-Air Participants

ARTISTS

Christo and Jeanne-Claude
Richard Tuttle
Chuck Close
Lawrence Weiner
Robert Barry
Lynda Benglis
Pat Steir
James Siena
Robert Mangold
Sylvia Mangold
Will Barnet
Lucio Pozzi
Sol LeWitt (from archival footage)

OTHER INTERVIEWEES

Alan Shestac, deputy director, National Gallery of Art
Jack Cowart, former curator, 20th Century Art, National Gallery of Art/ executive director, Roy Lichtenstein Foundation
Robert Storr, art critic/ curator/ Dean of the Yale School of Art
John Paoletti, art historian
John Weber, art dealer
Susanna Singer, business associate for Sol LeWitt and Robert Mangold
Paula Antebe, Herb's sister
Sidney and Carole Hoffman, Dorothy's brother and sister-in-law

About the Filmmaker

Megumi Sasaki (Producer/Director)

Originally a freelance journalist, Sasaki's first big break came in 1989 while covering the fall of the Berlin Wall. After three months of taking photographs and gathering stories directly from the streets and living rooms of Eastern Europe, Sas produced a 10-part series portraying the confusion and excitement gripping the life of people from former Iron Curtain nations. This series ran in *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Japan's highest-circulation newspaper.

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In 1992 Megumi joined NHK, Japan's sole public broadcaster, to work as anchor, news director and reporter for *Ohayo Nippon*, a popular morning news program. In 1996, Megumi returned to independent work as a freelance television documentary news director and field producer, developing programs for Japan's premiere documentary series, *NHK Special*, as well as for commercial networks including TBS, TV Asahi, Nippon Television and TV Tokyo. The resulting body of work explores such disciplines as art, science, medicine, business and international affairs. Highlights include examinations of African small arms proliferation, Nigerian Nobel laureate Wole Shoinka, arts education with Christo and Jeanne-Claude, economic globalization, international whaling and environmental disputes, aging societies, organ transplant, assisted suicide and right-to-die controversies, the crisis of nuclear North Korea, and many more.

In 2002 Megumi founded a production company, Fine Line Media, to streamline ongoing commitments to Japanese TV while facilitating her new interest in feature documentary projects. *Herb and Dorothy* is the first of these projects. Born and raised in Japan, Megumi has lived in New York City since 1988. In her career as a freelance print and television journalist she has traveled to over 40 countries.

About *Independent Lens*

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing Tuesday nights at 10PM on PBS. The acclaimed anthology series features documentaries and a limited number of fiction films united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement and unflinching visions of their independent producers. *Independent Lens* features unforgettable stories about a unique individual, community or moment in history. Presented by the Independent Television Service (ITVS), the series is supported by interactive companion websites and national publicity and community engagement campaigns. Further information about the series is available at www.pbs.org/independentlens. *Independent Lens* is jointly curated by ITVS and PBS, and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding provided by PBS and the National Endowment for the Arts. The series producer is Lois Vossen.

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