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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**GROUNDBREAKING SET FOR FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12
TO UNVEIL PLANS FOR NEW \$35 MILLION SALVADOR DALI MUSEUM**

Museum Will Nearly Double In Size – Public Invited To Surreal “Earth Shattering” Celebration

November 20, 2008 – (St. Petersburg, Florida) – Salvador Dalí Museum Director Hank Hine announced today that museum volunteers, trustees, staff, the Mayor of St. Petersburg and other civic leaders will welcome all members of the community to help break ground on the new Dalí on Friday, December 12, 2008. The public is invited to gather on the site – just south of the Mahaffey Theater within the Progress Energy Center for the Arts – at 10:30 a.m. for a surreal “earth shattering” celebration. After the ceremony, guests will be invited back to the Dali Museum for a special complimentary guided tour.

“The Board of Trustees of the Dalí Museum showed extraordinary confidence in art, in Dalí, in the St. Petersburg community, and in the American economy by giving this project the green light. They believe, as does the museum staff, that this community will support a project so vital to art and to our economy. It is an investment that will enrich this community far beyond its cost,” explained Hine. “The museum will be a distinguished architectural achievement with innovative design and technology, a combination, as in Dalí’s art, of the classical and the fantastic. It will be like no other building you have seen.”

The new Dalí building at 66,450 square feet will provide space for education of school groups, visitor orientation and classrooms, temporary exhibitions to complement the Dali collection, an indoor/outdoor café, and a rentable community room. Placed on the third floor to protect it from water and wind, the largest collection of Dali’s artwork outside Spain will have plenty of room for its spacious display.

St. Petersburg Mayor Rick Baker, whose support for the project was instrumental in helping the Dalí secure the initial state funding, will speak. The city has provided a 99-year lease of land for the new museum. Mayor Baker urges the citizens of St. Petersburg to join him in the ground breaking festivities.

“This extraordinary new museum will be a crown jewel to St. Petersburg’s growing cultural renaissance,” said Mayor Baker. “The building design is an unforgettable work of art.”

The new Dalí Museum is designed by renowned architect Yann Weymouth of HOK architectural firm and will be constructed by the Beck Group.

Dalí Development Director Marcia Crawley will kick off the \$10 million public capital campaign at the December 12th groundbreaking. “We are confident the members of our community will value the impact our new museum will have on the economy and cultural scene, and will support us with their gifts,” Crawley said.

Support from individuals, along with state and federal grants, has helped raise \$25 million for the project. The Dalí drives more than \$55 million in economic impact to the region each year, and that figure is expected to significantly increase when the new facility opens.

The Dalí is rated by the Michelin Guide as the highest ranked museum in the American South. The museum originally opened in 1982 in a one-story warehouse along the St. Petersburg waterfront. Today, a majority of the museum’s 200,000 annual visitors come to the Tampa Bay area expressly to see the Dalí.

The new museum will provide much-needed safety and security for the Dalí collection. The current facility is vulnerable to storm surge and wind damage in the event of a hurricane, and artwork must be relocated when storms threaten. The new museum will be built to withstand a Category 5 hurricane, and will protect artwork in its third floor galleries well above the 100-year floodplain.

The public is invited to contribute to the Dalí Capital Campaign at all levels. For information, contact Marcia Crawley at (727) 823-3767 ext. 3031.

Located at 1000 Third Street South in downtown St. Petersburg, Florida, the Salvador Dalí Museum holds the pre-eminent American collection of the artist’s work. The museum is sponsored in part by the Pinellas County Cultural Affairs Department, the City of St. Petersburg, the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, Florida Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.

For more information, please call (727) 823-3767 or visit the museum Web site at www.salvadordalímuseum.org.