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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**                      **April 27, 2007**

**EXHIBITION:**                                      **R. Crumb**

**DATES:**    **May 11 – June 16, 2007**

**Opening Reception:**                              **Friday, May 11, 2007, 6:00 - 8:00pm**

Opening on May 11, 2007, David Zwirner is pleased to present an exhibition of drawings by American artist R. Crumb, who lives and works in the south of France. Crumb's work is currently the focus of a solo exhibition entitled *R. Crumb's Underground* at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco, CA. He has had one-person exhibitions at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, The Netherlands (2005) and the Ludwig Museum, Cologne, Germany (2004). His numerous group exhibitions include *La Famille d'Artistes: Exposition Crumb*, Le Musée de Serignan, Serignan, France (2007); *Masters of American Comics*, The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA (traveled to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA; The Jewish Museum, New York, NY; and Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, WI); *Contemporary Erotic Drawing*, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT; *Experiencing Duration*, Lyon Biennial of Contemporary Art, Lyon, France (all 2005); *Beautiful Losers*, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA and additional venues; *Disparities and Deformations: Our Grotesque*, SITE Santa Fe, Santa Fe, NM; and *2004 Carnegie International*, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA (all 2004), among others. This will be R. Crumb's first exhibition at David Zwirner and will include figurative works from as early as 1972 and as recent as 2006.

R. Crumb emerged in the late 1960s as the leading figure in underground illustration, with drawings that are a sometimes caustic combination of 1930s comic strip style and post-Vietnam counterculture themes. Although he did not align himself with "hippie" ideologies – in fact, he has consistently disowned the connection – Crumb is the movement's reluctant poster child. Inspired by Thomas Nast, Honoré Daumier, T.S. Sullivant, James Gillray and others, his 40-year career is marked by an astonishingly prolific work ethic (he draws constantly and compulsively) and rigorous experimentation in a wide variety of media. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, he contributed to countless underground comics, including *Zap Comix*, *Weirdo*, and *Arcade*. In addition to a brief foray into painting in the 1980s, Crumb, entirely self-taught, has produced LPs, CDs, and sculptures. Best known for his works on paper, he is widely regarded as one of the most skillful portrait artists alive.

Popular culture, the absurdity of social conventions, political disillusionment, defeatism, self-deprecation, shock value, dehumanization, irony, racial and gender stereotypes and clichés, sexual fantasies and fetishes all work their way into Crumb's drawings, which are uncensored personal accounts of his life and, subsequently, culture at large. His images are unabashedly explicit in their depictions of the darkest human desires and perversions. In some of the works, he constructs elaborate scenarios for characters – one of his most famous is Mr. Natural, a parody of a hippie guru. In others, he takes the position of documentarian. For example, *Kansas Joe and Memphis Minnie* (1999) straightforwardly depicts the Blues greats with their instruments, and *James Brown* (2000), a two-sided drawing, shows the star in two classic positions – mid-dance move on one side and at the microphone on the other. Many of Crumb's works, drawn in ink on placemats at restaurant tables, manage to uncover the subtle realities and character flaws of their subjects. In *January 30<sup>th</sup>, '01. St. Hippolyte* (2001), two women sit at a restaurant table, one clearly bored smoking a cigarette and the other absentmindedly twirling her hair. In his macro views of ordinary people, Crumb zeroes in on idiosyncrasies, forcing the viewer to see their own flaws, needs and potential inadequacies mirrored in his subjects.