

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**The Museum of Modern Art****MOMA CONTINUES ITS PROJECTS SERIES IN UNCONVENTIONAL SPACES THIS FALL**

Projects 69: Julia Jacquette
November 12, 1999–Winter 2000

Projects 70: Shirin Neshat, Simon Patterson, Xu Bing
November 22, 1999–May 1, 2000

The Museum of Modern Art continues its Projects series this season with an eighteen-month sequence of artist projects on view in unconventional spaces. As a result of the expansive program of exhibitions that comprise MoMA2000, Projects vacates its usual gallery on the first floor of the Museum from November 1999 through May 2001. Although this is not the first time that the series has gone off-site, it marks the first time that the entire program will consist of out-of-gallery works.

"While MoMA's main floors will be devoted to reexamining the history of modern art, an international group of young talents will work around the institution's edges and fill in the internal gaps," remarked Robert Storr, Senior Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture. "If the past is any indication, they will, in the process, be hinting at the immediate future of art after 2000."

These artists have created works for the series that are diverse in nature and location. The first to go on view are Projects 69: Julia Jacquette, featuring paper cups, plates, and napkins designed by Julia Jacquette for MoMA's Café/Etc., a new space in the Museum's lower level that combines multimedia projects, a bookstore, and a café; and Projects 70: Shirin Neshat, Simon Patterson, Xu Bing, exhibiting banners created by Shirin Neshat, Simon Patterson, and Xu Bing for MoMA's facade. Other Projects will include installations in public areas, performances in the Museum and on the streets of New York, printed billboards throughout the city, computer art for MoMA's Web site, and pages for the MoMA magazine. With such a variety of spaces and locations, several Projects exhibitions will often be on view simultaneously.

Projects 69: Julia Jacquette

Projects 69: Julia Jacquette features an innovative series of paper plates, cups, and napkins, printed with text and artwork created by the New York-based painter specifically for these formats. Organized by Judith B. Hecker, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Prints and Illustrated Books, Projects 69 was conceived for the inauguration of Café/Etc. Starting November 12, patrons of the café will be served food and drink using these works.

Café/Etc. serves as a multimedia lab for the presentation and study of art using new technologies. In addition to a café and bar, Café/Etc. features film and video installations, computer kiosks with digital media, a bookstore, and coin-operated replicas of the Edison Company's original kinetoscopes from the 1890s. The space will also be used for artist talks, musical performances, educational events, and the presentation of works from the Projects series.

"With this project, Jacqueline's work takes on an inventive and assertive new format," commented Ms. Hecker. "It reaches a broader audience and furthers the artist's inquiries into the relationships between food, people, and desire."

Jacqueline's art explores multiple types of human longings. Her paintings of all-American food dishes, many popular in the 1950s, include elaborate desserts, platters of hors d'oeuvres, and hearty main courses. They are highly charged images of food that, in the context of her work, transcend their primary identification as something merely edible. By overlaying her images with erotic phrases that play on common culinary adages, Jacqueline creates metaphors for bodily presence, emotional sentiment, and cultural attitudes toward gender.

For her project at MoMA, Jacqueline has created five different images, each overlaid with a segment of the statement, "Every Moment of My Day I Think of Pressing My Lips Against Yours While I Hold Your Body Against Mine." The series includes a cup that pictures hot fudge being drizzled on vanilla cake and ice cream, a beverage napkin that depicts a brownie topped with ice cream and streams of hot fudge, a lunch napkin with two robust raspberry cream puffs, a dessert plate with a banana split punctuated with two tufts of whipped cream and maraschino cherries, and a sandwich plate that pictures a generous T-bone steak sliced open and prepared rare. Projects 69 invites the viewer to go beyond looking and to use these works, providing a direct encounter with the issues explored. Packaged plates, cups, and napkins will also be available for purchase in the Café/Etc. Bookstore and The MoMA Design Store.

Projects 70: Shirin Neshat, Simon Patterson, Xu Bing

Projects 70: Shirin Neshat, Simon Patterson, Xu Bing is the first in a cycle of three projects featuring banners that will be displayed on the Museum's Fifty-third Street facade from November 22, 1999, through May 1, 2000. Organized by Fereshteh Daftari, Assistant Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, Projects 70 exhibits banners designed by each of the three international artists that play with the written word. Rather than advertising coming attractions or MoMA itself, each banner contains an elaborate message. Neshat exorcises the contradictions Iranian women experience; Patterson invokes Harry Houdini to break through the limitations of traditional art; and Xu, at the dawn of the millennium, offers a wish to the public in multicultural calligraphy.

"The banners disrupt the familiar by taking over an area traditionally devoid of art and by pretending to be banners and not art," remarked Ms. Daftari. "Contrary to ordinary banners, which thrive on instant legibility and obvious content, they require prolonged attention and challenge facile readings."

Iranian-born artist Shirin Neshat presents a banner in which the dynamics of gender play a central role. Modeled on a 1993 self-portrait, each side of the banner reveals one half of her veiled face overlaid with a spiral of Persian calligraphy in black and red. Assuming conflicting roles within the same image, Neshat uses heavy makeup around her eyes and wears a chador—a Farsi word for the head-to-toe veil worn by many Muslim women in public. In Iran, the veil and, more recently, makeup, have been used as weapons of resistance, each carrying very distinct historical and cultural associations. Neshat has inscribed a poem by Forough Farrokhzad, Iran's foremost "feminist" poet, which suggests a sensual and intimate relationship between the author and nature. As with the makeup, Farrokhzad's poetry contradicts the veil, which represents the artifice

of social conventions.

The body and language are also key elements in the work of British artist Simon Patterson, who in his banner refers to the American magician Harry Houdini, for him a symbol of escape. On one side of the banner, Houdini's name, inscribed in red, hangs upside down on a Kodak Gray Scale—a color chart that shows the gradation from black to white. Black, the heaviest hue of the gray scale, defies gravity as it hovers above the dangling letters. On the reverse side, Patterson hints at the rationalist facet of Houdini. He spells out the performer's real name, Erich Weiss, and subjects the words to gravity, so to speak, by placing them horizontally at the bottom of the banner. The darkest part of the gray scale is now been inverted, and acts as the ground beneath the performer's feet.

Born in China, Xu Bing has created a banner in which pseudo-Chinese characters, when deciphered, read as English words. A quote from Mao Tse-tung's "Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art, May 1942" reads boldly in yellow on a red backdrop: "Art for the people." Smaller characters along the side of the banner read: "Chairman Mao Said / Calligraphy by Xu Bing." Xu's words are about making art accessible to everyone. The colors of the banner, matching those of the Chinese flag, refer to cultural customs. Chinese spring scrolls, for instance, inscribed in red and hung on doors around the time of the New Year, bear poems of luck and good wishes. Ms. Daftari notes, "At the break of the new millennium, this is an apt metaphor for Xu's call for reconciliation with a public he believes to be alienated by contemporary art."

Created in 1971 as a forum for emerging artists and new art, the Projects series has played a vital part in MoMA's contemporary art programs. Initiated by representatives from all of the Museum's curatorial departments, the series has presented the work of close to 200 artists to date. Projects exhibitions have featured off-site works in the past, including *Projects: Pier 18* (1971), which showed works on an abandoned pier in the Hudson River; *Projects 34: Felix Gonzalez-Torres* (1992), in which a mural-scale photograph was displayed on billboards around Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens; and *Projects 41: Gabriel Orozco* (1993), for which an edible grid sculpture of fresh oranges was placed in the windows of an apartment building facing the Museum's sculpture garden.

The Projects series is sponsored by Peter Norton.

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