

SWISS ARCHITECTURAL FIRM HERZOG & DE MEURON ORGANIZES AN EXHIBITION OF WORKS FROM MoMA'S COLLECTION AS PART OF THE ARTIST'S CHOICE SERIES

Herzog & de Meuron Are the First Architects to Curate an Artist's Choice Exhibition

Artist's Choice: Herzog & de Meuron, Perception Restrained

Special exhibitions gallery (third floor)
June 21–September 25, 2006

New York, June 20, 2006—*Artist's Choice: Herzog & de Meuron, Perception Restrained* is the first exhibition in the Artist's Choice series at The Museum of Modern Art for which architects have selected, juxtaposed, and commented on works from the Museum's collection. Swiss architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron examine MoMA's collection by offering a counterpoint to the collection galleries that challenges how art is categorized and displayed. Bringing together over a hundred works in the mediums of painting, sculpture, design, photography, and film, the installation establishes surprising spatial relationships between the artworks and the viewer and manipulates the viewer's perception.

Artist's Choice: Herzog & de Meuron, Perception Restrained is the eighth Artist's Choice exhibition since the series began in 1989. It is organized by Terence Riley, Director, Miami Art Museum, formerly The Philip Johnson Chief Curator of Architecture and Design at MoMA from 1992 to 2006; and Christian Larsen, Curatorial Assistant, Research and Collections, Department of Architecture and Design, The Museum of Modern Art. The exhibition will be on view in the third-floor special exhibitions gallery from June 21 through September 25, 2006.

Explains Mr. Riley, "Given Jacques Herzog's and Pierre de Meuron's deep appreciation of modern and contemporary art and how architecture shapes our perception of them, it is exciting to see the way they have responded to the Artist's Choice concept. By arranging works from the Museum's collection in a way that radically changes the viewers' spatial relationship to the art, they provoke us to see things as we haven't before."

At MoMA, a single, rectangular gallery is lined with rows of benches and swathed in darkness. With blank black walls and the flickering light of plasma screens affixed to the ceiling, the traditional "white cube" concept of gallery space disappears. The ceiling features a tiled grid of LCD monitors showing film clips, most of which are drawn from movies in MoMA's Film and Media collection. The only other sources of light are slots built into the sidewalls, which offer views into niches in which works from the Museum's collection are arranged. These niches contain 36 works from the Photography collection, 45 objects from the Architecture and Design collection, 28 works from the Painting and Sculpture collection, and one work from the Prints and Illustrated

Books collection. The works in the exhibition span over a century of art, from the late 1800s—Paul Cézanne’s painting *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat* (1875–76)—to two photographs from 2003—Marco Breuer’s *Pan* (C-279), and Gillian Wearing’s *Self-Portrait at 17 Years Old*.

“Our project is an attempt to offer a spatial alternative to the existing galleries for a limited period of time and in a limited space, a site of heightened concentration and density that functions like a kind of perception machine,” the architects state. “By obstructing and putting pressure on perception, the installation intensifies the viewing experience and makes it more enduring, more selective, and more individual.”

In their choice of films for the exhibition, the architects place their emphasis on specific fragments of films. The architects explain, “An undeniable shift in imagery has taken place in recent years—the moving image has received growing attention and makes explicit reference to violence, drama, and sex.” These iconic moments from popular cinema are displayed on screens installed on the ceiling, facing the floor. Excerpts are culled from classics such as Francis Ford Coppola’s *Apocalypse Now* (1979), Paul Morrissey’s *Flesh* (1968), Arthur Penn’s *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967), Martin Scorsese’s *Taxi Driver* (1976), and by Werner Herzog’s *Woyzeck* (1979).

Among the Architecture and Design objects, a broad history is represented, from William Morris’s *Strawberry Thief Pattern Printed Fabric* (1883) to Robert James Leonetti’s *Doublewide Chair* (2002). The selected objects represent major figures and movements as well as humble, anonymous designs, all based on the idea that the well-designed, mass-produced object improves and beautifies society with economy and efficiency. Some examples are containers by Earl S. Tupper; chairs by Alvar Aalto, Charles Eames, and Frank Lloyd Wright; and many electronic objects including the *Beogram 4000 Record Player* (1972) by Jakob Jensen, and Herzog & de Meuron’s own *Signal Box auf dem Wolf* (1988–95).

Works from the Photography, Painting and Sculpture, and Prints and Illustrated Books collections fall into three broad categories: abstraction, landscapes, and portraits. Abstraction is present in such sculptural works as Matthew Barney’s *The Cabinet of Baby Fay La Foe* (2000) and Louise Bourgeois’s *Untitled (sleep)* (c. 1960). Landscapes range from Andreas Gursky’s photograph *New Year’s Day Swimmers* (1988) to Gerhard Richter’s painting *Meadowland* (1985). Portraits include Diane Arbus’s photograph *Boy with a Straw Hat Waiting to March in a Pro-war Parade, New York City* (1967) and Frida Kahlo’s painting *My Grandparents, My Parents, and I (Family Tree)* (1936), among many others.

ABOUT THE ARTIST’S CHOICE EXHIBITION SERIES:

The Artist’s Choice series began in 1989, when the artist Scott Burton was invited by MoMA curator Kirk Varnedoe to organize an exhibition of works drawn entirely from the Museum’s collection. Subsequent Artist’s Choice exhibitions were organized by Ellsworth Kelly (1990), Chuck Close (1991), John Baldessari (1994), Elizabeth Murray (1995), Mona Hatoum (2004), and Stephen Sondheim (2005).

ABOUT THE ARCHITECTS:

Swiss architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron established their architectural practice in 1978. Working in Basel, Herzog and de Meuron are anchored in the city's vital art world. Both were born in 1950, trained under Aldo Rossi, and fostered their sensibility by collaborating with artists such as Joseph Beuys, Rémy Zaugg, Thomas Ruff, and, more recently, Ai Weiwei. In 2001, they were awarded the prestigious Pritzker Architecture Prize for their complete works. Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron also teach at Harvard University and at ETH Studio Basel—Contemporary City Institute of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich.

Herzog & de Meuron received international attention in the 1980s with designs for the Blue House in Oberwil, Switzerland (1980); Ricola Storage Building in Laufen, Switzerland (1987); the Stone House in Tavole, Italy (1988); and the Apartment Building along a Party Wall in Basel, Switzerland (1988). The firm has designed a series of internationally acclaimed museum buildings such as the Goetz Collection, a gallery for a private collection of modern art in Munich, Germany (1992); the Küppersmühle Museum for the Grothe Collection in Duisburg, Germany (1999); Tate Modern in London, England (2000); and Schaulager Basel (2003). Herzog & de Meuron have also designed museums in the United States, such as the Walker Art Center expansion in Minneapolis, Minnesota (2005); and the de Young Museum in San Francisco, California (2005). Since August 2005 they have been working on the new building for the Parrish Art Museum in Southampton, New York (projected completion 2009). In New York City, a condominium complex designed by Herzog & de Meuron is being erected on Bond Street in lower Manhattan by Ian Schrager and Aby Rosen. Among Herzog & de Meuron's other major projects are the National Stadium Beijing for the 2008 Olympic Games (projected completion 2007); the new Philharmonic Hall in Hamburg, Germany (projected completion 2009); and the new design for Tate Modern Completion in London (projected completion 2012). Together with their younger partners Harry Gugger, Christine Binswanger, Robert Hösl, Ascan Mergenthaler and Stefan Marbach and a team of nearly 200 architects, they are currently working on 40 other projects worldwide.

Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron were among three finalists in the competition to redesign The Museum of Modern Art, which reopened in 2004 with a redesign by Yoshio Taniguchi. Herzog & de Meuron's architectural proposal was exhibited in *Toward the New Museum of Modern Art* (1997) and *Rethinking the Modern: Three Proposals for The Museum of Modern Art* (1998).

SPONSORSHIP:

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PROGRAMS:

Adult and academic programs accompanying the exhibition include a panel discussion on Tuesday, September 19 at 6:30 p.m. in The Roy and Niuta Titus 2 Theater. **Glenn Lowry**, Director of The Museum of Modern Art, and **Jacques Herzog** discuss the collection from an architect's perspective and talk about the ways in which thoughtful selections and innovative installations inspire new understandings of art.

Tickets (\$10, members \$8, students and seniors \$5) can be purchased at the Museum lobby information desk and at the Film and Media Desk. Tickets are also available online at www.moma.org/thinkmodern. In addition, regularly scheduled **Gallery Talks**, free with Museum admission, take place daily.

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