New York, NY... “Museum as Hub: The Accords” is a multipart project exploring new forms of curatorial practice and international collaboration. Building on experimentation, critique, and play, the exhibition proposes new terms for agreement and considers whether an “accord” can inspire new methods of communication and production, and perhaps lead to new approaches to exhibition making in the process. Two exhibitions conceptually linked in their development will be presented on the fifth floor of the New Museum in addition to simultaneous manifestations initiated by Museum as Hub partners in Cairo, Eindhoven, Mexico City, and Seoul.

As the second part of “The Accords” project, “The Incongruous Image” is part response, part elaboration, and part critique of the first exhibition “An accord is first and foremost only a proposition” organized by guest curator Sarah Rifky of the Townhouse Gallery, Cairo and further anchors related manifestations organized by Hub partner institutions in Cairo, Eindhoven, Mexico City, and Seoul. The exhibition reflects upon the spirit of exchange and experimentation in Museum as Hub initiative rather than a space of classic exhibition, imagining a dialogue between two artists across geographic, temporal, and cultural contexts. “Museum as Hub: The Incongruous Image,” places in dialogue works by Marcel Broodthaers (b. 1924, Brussels, d. 1976, Cologne) and Liliana Porter (b. Buenos Aries, 1941) to highlight several points of common interest, or philosophical accords, that explore the politics of knowledge, pedagogy, and display. Bringing together the work of Broodthaers and Porter in one space, “The Incongruous Image” proposes a dialogue or exchange of ideas explored by these two artists. Marcel Broodthaers famously described his genesis as an artist with the statement, “Finally the idea of inventing something insincere crossed my mind and I set to work straightaway.”
Liliana Porter has posited that, “The only consciousness possible is doubt.” Positioning its inquiry between these spaces of insincerity and doubt, “The Incongruous Image” seeks to draw out, through juxtaposition, how each artist investigates the deceptions, dissonances, and incongruities that images and language can produce.

On the one hand, Broodthaers is revered in Europe and the United States to the point of almost becoming fetishized beyond discussion. As Barry Barker observes: “On occasions his works are treated by some institutions like the relics from a bygone age rather than what they are, the products of a vibrant and complex mind that has given us a heritage that through his objects, paintings, and texts expresses a continuous understanding of the nature of the human condition within an expanding cultural context.” Porter has lived in New York since 1964 and is a pillar in Latin American contemporary art history, but has presented work in only a limited number of museum exhibitions in the city where she lives.

Broodthaers and Porter are both profoundly influenced by works of René Magritte and Surrealist literature, exploring ways in which humor, riddle, and self-critique play fundamental roles in the oeuvres of both artists. Major works such as Broodthaers’s rarely seen slide projection Ombres Chinoise (1973/74) and Porter’s photogravure prints The Magritte Series (1975–77), employ various strategies of play to critique the role of the artist. Additional works by Porter further expand ideas of unexpected connection or encounter central to this exhibition. In her photogravure Picasso (1973), the artist’s finger “enters” the visual plane of a Picasso print, and in Dialogue with Penguin (1999), the artist juxtaposes the wooden, black-and-white toy bird with a gold Christ figure that doubles as a plastic lamp. The works are part of the artist’s ongoing series of “dialogues” that bring together objects from distinct periods and places into a single frame of reference in order to evoke a range of possible resonances, responses, and meanings. Porter will also present several new works in the exhibition, including Untitled (Ship) (2011), a large painting that is hung on the diagonal with a plastic toy ship with black paint dripped on it.

As an exchange of ideas, resources, and artwork, “The Incongruous Image” also explores how a museum collection can remain relevant to contemporary art activity and discourse. Here, the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven activates their collection by lending the New Museum significant, and rarely seen, works by Marcel Broodthaers. “The Incongruous Image” marks the first time a number of these works will be on view in New York. The exhibition includes Sex film (1971–72), a thirty-three-slide projection of the artist’s informal notes and doodles that belies the irreverent tone of the work’s title. Two plaques with the text “Museum: enfant non admis” plays with the seriousness of traditional art institutions, stating that children are not allowed in the museum. “The Incongruous Image” also features the large-scale work Sereis de neuf tableaux (1972), which consists of nine prints that list the names and important dates related to individuals such as Charles Baudelaire, Paul Valéry, Andre Gide, and René Magritte. Broodthaers presents each print with captions that often describe writers as painters and painters as writers—“Charles Baudelaire peint” (paints) and “René Magritte écrit” (writes)—a gesture which references Broodthaers’s transformation of himself from poet to visual artist.

“Museum as Hub: The Incongruous Image: Marcel Broodthaers and Liliana Porter” is organized by guest curators Annie Fletcher, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven and Tobias Ostrander, Museo Experimental El Eco, Mexico City.

Profiles

Marcel Broodthaers
During his twelve-year career as a visual artist, Marcel Broodthaers produced an astonishing variety of works in a wide range of mediums, including enigmatic objects made of egg and mussel shells, elegant typographic paintings, films, prints, photographs, and ephemeral, provocative installations. Heir to fellow Belgian René Magritte, his works have also been linked to Pop art, Conceptualism, Dada, and Minimalism. While extremely rich in allusion, Broodthaers’s work is ultimately enigmatic and his meaning elusive. Rather than providing answers, Broodthaers’s work raises questions about the very nature of art and the institutions that protect and foster it. Born in Brussels in 1924, Broodthaers was actively involved in the intellectual life of the city, and by 1960 had published two books of poetry, produced a film, and was writing and lecturing on art. His career as a visual artist began in 1964 when he embedded in
plaster fifty copies of his last volume of poems, *Pense Bête*. Early works that responded to American Pop artists such as Jim Dine and George Segal included everyday objects that Broodthaers altered, often by simply signing his name to them. His later series of fictional museum installations explored the ways in which context affects the meaning of objects. Many of Broodthaers’s later individual works, such as his typographic paintings and plastic plaques, explore the problematic nature of language and the sometimes arbitrary conventions upon which it rests.

**Liliana Porter**

Through humor, visual mischief, and empathy, the art of Liliana Porter uses small means to ask large questions. Working with a range of mediums that includes printmaking, drawing, painting, installation, and film, the artist investigates questions of representation, the structuring of reality, and the desire for meaning. Liliana Porter was born in 1941 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She lived in Mexico City from 1958 to 1961, where she studied visual arts at the Universidad Iberoamericana. In 1964 she moved to New York City, where she continues to live and work. Porter co-founded the New York Graphic Workshop with Luis Camnitzer and José Guillermo Castillo in 1956. Throughout her forty-year career, Porter has been awarded numerous grants and fellowships including a Solomon R. Guggenheim Fellowship in 1980. Her works have been exhibited internationally and are represented in many public and private collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Tate Modern, London; Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Santiago; Museo de Arte Moderno de Bogotá; La Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Daros Collection, Zurich; and Museo Tamayo, Mexico.

**Public Programs**

Thursday, May 12, 7 p.m.

**Film Screening and Discussion with Liliana Porter**

New Museum Theater
Free to Members, $8 General Public

In conjunction with the exhibition “The Incongruous Image: Marcel Broodthaers and Liliana Porter,” the New Museum presents a screening of Liliana Porter’s film *Matinee / Matíné* (2009), followed by a conversation between the artist and critic and curator Gregory Volk. Discussion focuses on Porter’s practice and expands to speculate on resonances between her investigations over the past thirty years and those of Marcel Broodthaers in the 1960s and 1970s.

Saturday, May 14, 2 p.m.

**Gallery talk with Guest Curators Annie Fletcher and Tobias Ostrander**

Fifth Floor
Free with Museum Admission

Guest curators Annie Fletcher, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, and Tobias Ostrander, Museo Experimental El Eco, Mexico City, discuss the development of the exhibition “The Incongruous Image: Marcel Broodthaers and Liliana Porter.” They address their interests in the role of humor, irreverence, and critical perspectives in art as articulated in the work of Broodthaers and Porter.

Saturday, June 11, 2 p.m.

**Rachel Haidu on the Work of Marcel Broodthaers**

New Museum Theater
Free to Members, $8 General Public

Associate Professor in the Department of Art and Art History and the Graduate Program in Visual and Cultural Studies at the University of Rochester, Rachel Haidu will discuss the influence of René Magritte on Marcel Broodthaers’s art practice and share research from her book *The Absence of Work: Marcel Broodthaers, 1964–1976* (2010).
About the Museum as Hub
The Museum as Hub is a partnership of six international arts organizations that supports art activities and experimentation; explores artistic, curatorial, and institutional practice; and serves as an important resource for the public to learn about contemporary art from around the world. Initiated by the New Museum in 2006, this partnership includes art space pool, Seoul, South Korea; Museo Experimental El Eco, Mexico City, Mexico; Museo Tamayo, Mexico City, Mexico; Townhouse Gallery, Cairo, Egypt; and the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, the Netherlands. Museum as Hub at the New Museum is organized by Eungie Joo, Keith Haring Director and Curator of Educations and Public Programs.

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