

## MoMA Will Project Doug Aitken's 'Exploded Cinema' on Facade

July 25 (Bloomberg) -- Museum of Modern Art director Glenn D. Lowry joined New York City officials today in announcing the institution's first foray into public art. Starting Jan. 16, 2007, a seven-screen film projection by Los Angeles-based artist Doug Aitken will wrap itself around the museum's glass facade and remain on view to passersby each evening through Feb. 12.

At a press conference held today in the museum's outdoor sculpture garden, Aitken, 38, described the as-yet-untitled work as "exploded cinema," a kind of fractured, 21st-century take on a drive-in movie for pedestrians.

Those walking along the West 53rd or West 54th Street sides of the museum or strolling in its garden (or in front of the American Folk Art Museum next door) will "fall in" with the stories of five separate characters as they move from their apartments to the streets and subways and back again.

The million-dollar production, now shooting in New York, features a cast that includes the actress Tilda Swinton, American pop singer Cat Power and Brazilian music and film star Seu Jorge.

Public art has come a long way from statues only a pigeon could love.

"Think of it as a marriage between architecture and film," said Aitken, a onetime director of music videos whose large-scale, multiscreen installations at the Whitney Museum and P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center have won him a wide following.

### Draw for Tourists

City officials at the press conference made it clear that they are thinking of the project -- an unusual collaboration between MoMA and Creative Time, a nonprofit public-art organization -- as a major tourist attraction.

Cristyne L. Nicholas, of the city's visitors bureau NYC & Company, called the work "a great opportunity to raise New York's profile as a premiere cultural destination." She indicated that such crowd-pleasers are especially useful in winter months, when tourist dollars can be scarce.

"We've seen great art bring people out of hibernation," said mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, in reference to the enormous success of "The Gates," the outdoor project that artists Christo and Jean-Claude brought to Central Park in the winter of 2004. On hand at MoMA to announce the Aitken project, the mayor predicted, "It's going to be unforgettable." (Bloomberg is the founder and majority owner of Bloomberg LP, the parent of Bloomberg News.)

So far, there is no plan for dialogue or a soundtrack to accompany the 35-mm color film. Nor will it have a clear beginning or end. "Viewers," Aitken said, "will experience it the way they do the city, as a constantly changing collage."

Doug Aitken's film will be on view daily from Jan. 16 through Feb. 12, 2007, from dusk to 10 p.m. at the Museum of Modern Art. Information: (1)(212) 708-9400; <http://www.moma.org> .

(Linda Yablonsky is an art critic for Bloomberg News. The opinions expressed are her own.)

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