

CREATIVETIME



Photo: Fred Charles, rendering courtesy Doug Aitken studio

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART AND CREATIVE TIME JOINTLY COMMISSION ARTIST DOUG AITKEN TO CREATE *sleepwalkers* A NEW SITE-SPECIFIC WORK TO PROJECT ON MOMA'S EXTERIOR, WINTER 2007

(New York, October 1, 2006) Creative Time and The Museum of Modern Art will present *sleepwalkers* the first U.S. large-scale public project by internationally renowned contemporary artist Doug Aitken, from January 16 through February 12, 2007, each evening from 5pm to 10pm. The multi-screen cinematic experience will be projected on seven facades of MoMA on 53rd and 54th Streets, integrating art with the exterior of the modernist architecture of the museum for the first time.

Filming began this summer in NYC and continues through October. Building on Aitken's interest in collaborating with a range of artists, musicians, and filmmakers in his books, happenings and art projects, this film features a diverse cast of actors including **Tilda Swinton**, **Chan Marshall (Cat Power)**, **Seu Jorge**, **Ryan Donowho**, and **Donald Sutherland**.

Inspired by the verticality and densely built environment of New York's midtown, the artwork directly integrates with the architectural fabric of the city while simultaneously enhancing and challenging viewers' perceptions of public space. It magnifies poignant moments of peoples' everyday lives into a dialogue between pedestrians and the complex architectural landscape they traverse. The film features characters from a variety of walks of New York City life, following them as they move from the solitude of their personal and professional lives into the chaotic and rich interrelationships of their urban existence. In one case, it tracks a worker who maintains signs in Times Square, following him as he ascends into the interior of the infrastructure of one of the city's storied districts; other characters include a street drummer, a businessman, and a postal worker. The seven simultaneous projections will have synced choreographed movements, but

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the individual energy and personality of each character will be expressed through nuanced signifiers from the color of the walls, clothes, and personal style to the environments they pursue once they exit their apartments.

Aitken looks at the pedestrian experience as one of the many pattern and rhythm-based relationships we have with the city, and this artwork will reflect and reframe this relationship as something both erratic and lyrical. The artwork turns the city inside out, revealing the rhythm of New York that is manifest at various levels, always about to ecstatically transcend the infrastructure through which it travels.

sleepwalkers will be projected on a range of surfaces both translucent and opaque, mingling with the interiors of the museum in places while it turns other facades into screens more reminiscent of an urban drive-in. The glass curtain walls of the Museum's new Education Wing and its Gallery Wing will both be used, along with the north-facing administrative buildings in the Sculpture Garden, the glazed brick of the Museum's northwest corner on 54th Street, the black stucco of the American Folk Art Museum, and the black granite over the Museum's main entrance on 53rd Street. MoMA Director Glenn D. Lowry said, "The Museum is delighted to commission Doug Aitken to create this unprecedented work, which will integrate his compelling artistic vision with the distinctive architecture of the new Museum building by Yoshio Taniguchi. In animating the exterior of our building, Aitken's work is intended to resonate with the public beyond our walls and to underscore The Museum of Modern Art's dynamic relationship with the vibrant urban fabric of New York City."

"By turning the generic concrete and glass language of midtown architecture into a fluid mesh of interacting personal landscapes, the project will challenge viewers to experience their environment anew," said Anne Pasternak, Creative Time President and Artistic Director. By focusing the piece directly upon the museum itself, Aitken suggests to the public that art has the power to find resonance in our daily lives beyond the walls of the institutions where we most often encounter it. In presenting this monumental piece, Creative Time and MoMA jointly put forward a new mode of engagement with the city and its architecture, allowing art to offer an alternative to the rapid proliferation of commercial media as the dominant visual theater of the urban landscape.

Mayor Bloomberg announced the project at a press conference with the artist on July 25 and stated, "Public art projects like the Doug Aitken project at MoMA provoke thought, create conversation and community, and cause us to look at our environment, and our lives, in new ways. ... This project is certain to be the kind of exciting artistic event that will do just that."

Sleepwalkers will be shown each night from January 16 through February 12, beginning at 5:00 P.M. through 10:00 P.M. The exhibition is free. The project is produced and filmed in New York. The projections will be overseen by Scharff Weisberg, Inc. using Chrystie Digital Systems, Inc.

THE ARTIST

sleepwalkers continues Aitken's (American, b. 1968) body of work that explores the evolving ways people experience memory and narrative and relate to fast-paced urban environments. During the past decade, the artist has created innovative contemporary video art by fracturing the narrative structures of his films across multi-screen environments and challenging our perceptual capacities. His work has been exhibited in museums around the world, including The Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris. In 1999, he was awarded the International Prize at the Venice Biennale. In 2004, Aitken's installation *Interiors* (2002) was shown as part of the exhibition *Hard Light* at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, a MoMA affiliate.

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PUBLICATION

The Museum of Modern Art, in association with Creative Time, will publish a book in January 2007 that will serve as both a document and an extension of the project. Designed by Aitken's studio and featuring critical texts from Klaus Biesenbach, Curator, Department of Film and Media, The Museum of Modern Art, and Chief Curator, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center; and Peter Eleey, Curator and Producer, Creative Time, the book will examine Aitken's dramatic combinations of structural and narrative devices as well as additional behind-the-scenes material about his creative process.

ABOUT CREATIVE TIME

Creative Time presents innovative art in the public realm. From its base in New York, it works with artists who ignite the imagination and explore ideas that shape society. It initiates a dynamic conversation among artists, sites, and audiences, in projects that enliven public spaces with free and powerful expression. Creative Time first worked with Aitken in 1996 for Art in the Anchorage 13, in which film/video, audio, and digital media artists created environments in the Brooklyn Bridge anchorage's vast chambers, introducing viewers to a range of new digital artistic processes through sound, moving image, and interactivity.

SPONSORSHIP

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The production of the film has been made possible in part by Eastman Kodak Company, LaCie, AJA Video Systems, and Arri CSC.

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PRESS CONTACTS

Creative Time

Maureen Sullivan, 212/206-6674, ext. 205; maureens@creativetime.org

The Museum of Modern Art

Ruth Kaplan, 212/708-9593; Ruth_Kaplan@moma.org

Kim Mitchell, 212/333-6594; Kim_Mitchell@moma.org