



MoMA Exterior To Be Turned Into Outdoor Movie Screen July 25, 2006

The city is welcoming a special art installation this winter that will turn the Museum of Modern Art in Manhattan into an outdoor movie screen.

The glass and concrete building that houses MoMA is expected to draw thousands of visitors in January when a film is projected onto the museum's façade. It's the first free public art exhibit by artist Doug Aitken here in the United States.

Aitken's film for MoMA will center on the stories of five New Yorkers, with all of the scenes filmed in the city.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg says he's thrilled about the upcoming exhibit, which he expects to attract tourists during an otherwise slow season.

The artist says his film will give people a new perspective on their relationship with the city.

“I was very interested in looking at these very quiet, intimate moments and seeing if they could expand across buildings and kind of represent people inside them instead of always looking out and seeing cold glass, steel and concrete,” Aitken said at a news conference Tuesday.

“Great art brings people out of hibernation, and Doug's project is certain to be the kind of exciting artistic event to draw tourists to our city,” said the mayor.

The free film project will run from dusk to 10 p.m. every day for about a month beginning next year on January 16th.

Big public art projects can mean big money for the city. Perhaps emboldened by the success of "The Gates," the city is throwing its weight behind a very different winter public art program. NY1's Stephanie Simon filed this report.

The Museum of Modern Art spent more than \$400 million transforming itself back in 2004, and now \$1 million will be spent to transform MoMA once again. This time it's not expanding or renovating – artist Doug Aitken is turning the museum's exterior into a work of art.

“I think the project itself began with a desire to really find a way to bring people's lives into the buildings of Midtown,” says the artist.

And this winter, that's what Aitken will do. Not inside the museum, but outside, as he projects a series of films onto the exterior.

On Tuesday, Aitken, MoMA, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and other city officials announced details of the upcoming project.

“The exceptional work which will envelop MoMA's building with continuous sequences of film scenes will feature the stories of five New Yorkers and will be filmed entirely in our city,” said Bloomberg.

Aitken says the fictional characters represent the entire city.

“One of the characters is a worker who works inside the signs of Times Square, and his whole life is electricity and light and pulsing energies,” says the artist. “Someone else is a bicycle messenger who lives a very kind of raw, tactile life.”

Those stories will be projected at night onto the exterior of the Museum of Modern Art and Folk Art Museum from dusk to 10 p.m. every day for about a month beginning January 16th of next year.

The project was commissioned by MoMA and the public art organization Creative Time.

“As our city is populated with commercial messages, art is great way for the people of the city, the citizens and its visitors to be spoken to in a way that's not just, ‘Buy, buy, buy,’” says Creative Time President Anne Pasternak.

This is first time MoMA is doing any kind of exterior art projections. But perhaps even more exciting to some, admission is free.

“This project is just a way for us to engage with the city in a new way and to say thank you,” says MoMA Director Glenn Lowry. “And we're thrilled that we can do it for free.”

But don't forget your wallet. The city hopes this large scale public art event will help wake the sleepy post-holiday winter tourist season.

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While you'll have to wait until January for the Doug Aitken project, every Friday night at the MoMA is still pay what you wish.

– Stephanie Simon