



MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Daniele Robson
Communications Manager

MCA DENVER

1485 Delgany Denver CO 80202
(001) 303 298 7554

MCA DENVER PRESENTS PUBLIC ART INSTALLATION PROJECTS FOR THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

DENVER, August 16, 2008 — In correlation with the start of the Democratic National Convention, the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver is presenting two public art installation projects, one by artist duo Nora Ligorano and Marshall Reese (Ligorano/Reese) titled *The State of Things*, and another by artist Suzanne Opton titled *Soldier*. Both projects are curated by Cydney Payton, Executive Director and Chief Curator of MCA DENVER.

LIGORANO/REESE: THE STATE OF THINGS

2:00 PM Wednesday, August 27th – On view for approximately 24 hours.

Ice Sculpture Installation in front of MCA DENVER

The artist duo Nora Ligorano and Marshall Reese (Ligorano/Reese), in conjunction with the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver, present *The State of Things*, an ice sculpture of the word "Democracy." The work will be installed at 2:00 PM on Wednesday, August 27th and disappear within 24 hours. Located outside the front entrance of the MCA DENVER, this "temporary sculpture" weighs almost 2,000 pounds and measures 36 inches tall and 180 inches in width.

According to Ligorano, "The sculpture is emblematic of our times – our democracy is in danger of wasting away at an imperceptible rate." Reese adds, "What stands out – is that for the amount of time most people view art – 1 minute or less – the sculpture won't seem to change, yet by day's end, it will be gone - disappeared, like so much of what is happening to the values and institutions that make America a great country... This piece focuses on the impact of the War on Terror... and how it has transformed American society."

The artists will capture the sculpture's disappearance on videotape and digital still photography transforming the event into a multi-faceted performative installation. *The State of Things* will be available as a webcast during the disappearance to create a "viral projection." The following week, on September 1st, Ligorano/Reese will re-present *The State of Things* in St. Paul/Minneapolis marking the start of the Republican Convention. Ligorano says, "We chose to present the sculpture at both conventions to highlight the fact that preserving our democratic values is a bipartisan issue. We want to engage people from all sides of the political spectrum." The sculpture in the Twin Cities will also be videotaped and streamed over the internet. The video from both conventions, then, will form the basis for a large-scale media installation at the American University Museum in Washington, DC, September to October, 2008. This installation combines footage of the event with street interviews of passersby, giving their views on democratic values, with the ice sculpture as a backdrop.

LIGORANO/REESE

Nora Ligorano and Marshall Reese have collaborated as Ligorano/Reese since the early 1980s. Their work examines contemporary trends in society and the media through the manipulation of images and sound from print, television, the internet, and radio. Their installations, limited edition multiples and artists books have been exhibited at Jim Kempner Fine Art, Kent Gallery, the Beall Center, the Cleveland Museum of Art, MIT MediaLab, Museum of Arts & Design, the Neuberger Museum of Art, and Lincoln Center. They have received fellowships and funding from the Jerome Foundation, The Puffin Foundation, NYFA, NYSCA, the NEA, Art Matters and been artists in residence at Montalvo, the MacDowell Colony and Djerassi Resident Artists Program.

BRUSHFIRE, A PROVISIONS PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

This project is part of BrushFire, a Provisions Public Art program with support from CrossCurrents Foundation. Provisions Learning Project pioneers the exploration of creative social change in exhibitions and public programs. Its online publications and research library have become a trusted source for information on breakthrough social change topics from around the world.



Above: Nora Ligorano and Marshall Reese, *The State of Things*, 2008, ice, 36 x 180 inches, Courtesy of the artists.

SUZANNE OPTON: SOLDIER

Monday, August 25, 2008 to Sunday, September 21, 2008

Billboard at 1950 Lincoln Street, Denver, CO.

A billboard at 1950 Lincoln Street in Downtown Denver titled, "Soldier Claxton: 120 Days in Afghanistan", sponsored by MCA DENVER, launches Suzanne Opton's *Soldier Billboard Project*, and will be on view during the Democratic National Convention through September. A website accompanying the project, www.SoldiersFace.com, will document, contextualize and create dialogue about the project as a whole. MCA DENVER is proud to present special projects such as this that encourage interaction and feedback between artists and the public.

For the imagery on which this project is based, Suzanne Opton took the photos of American soldiers at Fort Drum between each soldier's tour of duty in 2004 or 2005 in Iraq or Afghanistan. Her portraits afford the viewer a very intimate and serious look at the young men and women who have put their lives at risk serving in the military.

Of her *Soldier* series she says, "We all experience strategic moments when we feel most alive. These are the moments we will always remember, be they transcendent or horrific. After all, what are we if not our collection of memories? In making these portraits of soldiers, I simply wanted to look in the face of someone who'd seen something unforgettable." Opton poses questions about the thousands of soldiers returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, including, "what did they do, what did they see, and how did their war experience affect them as they return to civilian life?"

The *Soldier Billboard* project is sponsored by Museum of Contemporary Art Denver, Atlanta Center for Contemporary Art, Forecast Public Art, St Paul, and DiverseWorks Artspace, Houston. These four arts organizations are sponsoring ten *Soldier* billboards. The Museum of Contemporary Art in Denver will launch the project with a billboard for the Democratic National Convention. Forecast Public Art in Minneapolis/ St. Paul is sponsoring five billboards during the Republican National Convention. DiverseWorks in Houston and the Atlanta Center for Contemporary Art are sponsoring billboards that will be up in September through the elections in November.

Suzanne Opton's work has been exhibited internationally, and is featured in the permanent collections of the Bibliotheque Nationale de France in Paris; the Musee de'Elysee in Lausanne, Switzerland; and the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston. She has received grants from the Vermont Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the New York Foundation for the Arts. Opton's work has appeared in a variety of publications including *Orion*, *The New York Times*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *Fortune*. Opton teaches at the International Center of Photography and at Cooper Union.

SOLDIER

WWW.SOLDIERSFACE.COM



A collaboration between
Suzanne Opton and MCA DENVER

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Above: Suzanne Opton, *Soldier Claxton: 120 Days in Afghanistan*, 2008, design for a 12' x 24' billboard, Courtesy of the artist.

MCA DENVER OPEN TO ALL
WHAT'S IT TO YOU?

Currently on View

Susanne Kühn
May 27, 2008 – September 21, 2008
Large Works Gallery

Jack Balas
June 3, 2008 – September 7, 2008
Project Gallery

Brad Kahlhamer
June 10, 2008 – September 21, 2008
Promenade Space

Omer Fast
July 22 – January 4, 2009
New Media Gallery

Adam Helms
August 12, 2008 – January 18, 2009
Paper Works Gallery

Jane Hammond
August 19, 2008 – February 8, 2009
Photography Gallery

Upcoming Exhibitions

Terry Maker
September 16, 2008 – January 18, 2009
Project Gallery

Jonas Burgert
October 7, 2008 – March 1, 2009
Promenade Space

Damien Hirst
October 7, 2008 – August 30, 2009
Large Works Gallery

Yang Fudong
December 9, 2008 – April 5, 2009
New Media Gallery

About MCA DENVER

Following the European tradition of the *kunsthalle*, MCA DENVER is a non-collecting institution acting as an incubator for art and ideas, artistic exchange and dialogue. As Denver's first institution devoted entirely to contemporary art, MCA DENVER inaugurated its new environmentally sustainable facility designed by David Adjaye on October 28, 2007. The 27,000 square foot space, located in the Lower Downtown area, is on track to receive the distinction of Gold level Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). The design of the building supports rather than defines the Museum's mission and demonstrates the Museum's commitment to sustainability. MCA DENVER marks David Adjaye's first public building in the U.S. as well as his first contemporary art museum worldwide.

Since opening, MCA DENVER has welcomed over 38,500 visitors to the new building to experience the Museum's exhibition program. Continuing our investment in exhibitions of artworks by local, national and international artists, MCA DENVER has five distinct galleries, three spaces for education, multiple sites for special projects/commissioned works and one live art and lecture hall as potential sites for work in all media. These galleries and spaces have been envisioned as platforms for multi-level curatorial possibilities. The exhibition areas are thus seen as a curatorial rubric for interaction between artists, works of art, curatorial practice and interpretive dialogue.

Location, Hours and Ticket Prices

MCA DENVER is located at 1485 Delgany on the corner of 15th Street and Delgany, DENVER, CO. Tel. (001) 303 298 7554. Museum hours are Tuesday through Thursday 10:00AM to 6:00PM, Friday 10:00AM to 10:00PM and Saturday and Sundays 10:00AM to 6:00PM. The Museum is closed on Mondays. General admission to the Museum is \$10.00, senior and student tickets are \$5.00. MCA DENVER offers \$1 off admission to visitors who come to the Museum via public transportation. Children under the age of 5 are admitted free.

Support

MCA DENVER receives annual support for its exhibitions and programs from members of the Director's and President's Circles, as well as from the following generous supporters at the \$5,000 and above: A.B. Hirschfeld Press, Inc., Caulkins Family Foundation, Colorado Council on the Arts, Compton Foundation, Inc., Connie Burwell White & William W. White Foundation, Continuum Partners, LLC, The Denver Foundation, Gates Corporation, Gay & Lesbian Fund for Colorado, General Service Foundation, The Janus Foundation, KEW Realty, KeyBank, Komorebi, LLC, NSO Press, Riverfront Park Community Foundation, Room & Board, Sage Hospitality Resources, SCFD, St. Mary Land & Exploration Company, Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation, Thickman Foundation, Three Tomatoes Catering, and US Bank.

For more information about programs and exhibitions please visit www.mcadenver.org or contact Daniele Robson at (001) 303 298 7554 ex.224 or danieler@mcadenver.org.