

**THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART CELEBRATES THE OPENING OF MoMA QNS  
ITS NEW HOME IN LONG ISLAND CITY, QUEENS, WITH FIVE INAUGURAL EXHIBITIONS**

**NEW YORK, JULY 2002**—On June 29, 2002, The Museum of Modern Art celebrated the grand opening of MoMA QNS, its new Museum in Long Island City, Queens. Michael Maltzan Architecture (Los Angeles) and Scott Newman of Cooper, Robertson & Partners (New York) have radically transformed the former Swingline staple factory building into a sleek and elegant showcase for modern and contemporary art. The intense blue stucco exterior recalls the original bright blue brick of the Swingline factory. The space encompasses 160,000 square feet, with 25,000 square feet of exhibition space, as well as a café and store; conservation laboratory; library and public reading room; collections, imaging, and framing facilities; offices; and storage space. MoMA QNS will present a dynamic program of exhibitions while construction is under way at the Museum's midtown Manhattan site. It will serve as a permanent home for storage of MoMA's collection, as well as a facility for conservation, study, and research. MoMA QNS joins a growing list of cultural destinations, galleries, and artists who have discovered the vibrant community that characterizes Long Island City, located in New York City's Borough of Queens, just across the East River from Manhattan. The new Museum of Modern Art, designed by Yoshio Taniguchi, is scheduled to open in 2005 in midtown Manhattan.

**The Opening Celebrations**

To celebrate the opening of MoMA QNS, the Museum commissioned several contemporary artists to create new works. On the evening of June 29, *Transient Rainbow*, a one-minute fireworks display conceived by artist Cai Guo-Qiang and produced by Fireworks by Grucci, Inc., illuminated the East River with a rainbow arching from Manhattan to Queens, bridging the two boroughs. In a work collaboratively organized by MoMA and the Public Art Fund, artist Francis Alÿs staged a ceremonial procession on June 23 commemorating MoMA's move. Departing from 11 West 53 Street, moving over the Queensboro Bridge, marching up Queens Boulevard, and ending at MoMA QNS, the performance was evocative of both a saint's day procession and a secular celebration. Reproductions of some of the Museum's most well-known works, including Pablo Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.)*, Alberto Giacometti's *Standing Woman*, and Marcel Duchamp's *Bicycle Wheel* were carried on palanquins or litters, as was artist Kiki Smith. Uniformed participants spread rose petals along the route throughout the three-hour procession, and were accompanied by a Peruvian band. The artist's video documentation of the event is on view in a gallery at MoMA QNS

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along with several of his preliminary drawings for the performance.

The Department of Film and Media has selected several works that are projected in various areas of the lobby at MoMA QNS. A multipart film by Ernie Gehr was commissioned by the Museum for the lobby projections, *MoMA on Wheels* (2002), shot on West 53 Street in Manhattan, and *Modern Navigation* (2002), shot at a California aquarium. Also on view are Seoungcho Cho's *Cold Pieces 2* (2002), Melinda Morey's *Navigating the Void* (2002), Piotr Wyrzykowski's *Beta Nassau* (1993), and Pia Lindman's *Thisplace* (2001–02). A selection of films from the Film and Media Archive shot in New York is also on view, including *Lumière: New York Views* (1896), Jay Leyda's *A Bronx Morning* (1931), Edwin S. Porter's *Coney Island at Night* (1905), Irving Browning's *City of Contrasts* (1931), American Mutoscope and Biograph Company's *Interior N.Y. Subway, 14<sup>th</sup> Street to 42<sup>nd</sup> Street* (1905), and Helen Levitt's *In the Street* (1952).

Two publishing projects also mark the opening of MoMA QNS. Artist Judith Henry produced a visitors' booklet entitled *Overheard on the Way to MoMA QNS*, a humorous work featuring black-and-white photographs and text by the artist that also gives visitors travel directions.

William Wegman's *How Do You Get to MoMA QNS?* is a lighthearted travelogue in which Chip, one of Wegman's famous weimaraners, journeys from Manhattan to Long Island City. The book shows the ease with which visitors who arrive at the Museum's midtown location during its building project can find their way to MoMA QNS.

On MoMA QNS's opening weekend, June 29 and 30, visitors enjoyed free admission and extended hours from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

### **Inaugural Exhibitions**

MoMA QNS presents a full schedule of exhibitions featuring works from the Museum's renowned collection of masterpieces, as well as temporary exhibitions of art from public and private collections worldwide. The five inaugural exhibitions are:

- ***To Be Looked At: Painting and Sculpture from the Collection***, a rotating installation of masterworks featuring icons of early modern art, from Vincent van Gogh's *The Starry Night* (1889) to Pablo Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J.)* (1911–12), as well as key examples from the Museum's superb holdings of mid-century and contemporary art.
- ***AUTObodies: speed, sport, transport*** (through September 16, 2002) presents MoMA's existing collection of automobiles—Ferrari's Formula 1 racing car (1990), the Cisitalia "202" GT (1946), and Jaguar's E-type Roadster (1963)—alongside three new acquisitions on view for the first time: a Smart Car (2002), a Volkswagen "Beetle" (1959), and a Willys-Overland Jeep (1953).

- **Tempo** (through September 9, 2002) assembles a broad spectrum of works that consider the concept of time, whether actual, perceptual, symbolic, or imaginary. Work by artists from Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe reveal the cultural differences regarding notions of time.
- **A Walk through Astoria and Other Places in Queens: Photographs by Rudy Burckhardt** (through November 4, 2002) brings to public view for the first time selections from previously unpublished albums of photographs taken in Queens in the early 1940s by the Swiss-born photographer and filmmaker. Burckhardt's love of Queens and its inhabitants is evident, yet his artistic sophistication steers clear of sentimentality.
- **Projects 76: Francis Alÿs** (through September 16, 2002). On view is a video and drawings of the artist's ceremonial procession—collaboratively organized by MoMA and the Public Art Fund—commemorating MoMA's move from midtown Manhattan to Long Island City, Queens.

### **The Architecture**

The master plan for MoMA QNS was developed by Cooper, Robertson & Partners (New York), who also served as executive architects on the project, led by Scott Newman. Michael Maltzan Architecture (Los Angeles) was commissioned to design the lobby, public entrance, and the entrance to the galleries. The building provides a solution to MoMA's need for storage and office space and allows MoMA to keep its world-renowned collection accessible to the public while construction is under way at its midtown location. The layout of the 25,000 square feet of gallery space is flexible—only the perimeter wall is fixed. Within this large open space, temporary walls can be reconstructed to suit specific exhibition designs. For example, MoMA's collection of six automobiles are on view together for the first time in one large gallery in *AUTObodies: speed, sport, transport*. Twenty-one-foot-high ceilings throughout the space accommodate large contemporary works.

### **Michael Maltzan Architecture**

Michael Maltzan Architecture created a striking and innovative design—the public entrance; the lobby; the mezzanine, including the café and store; and the entrance to the exhibition galleries. The spare and polished design suggests the concept of movement while maintaining the solid industrial feel of the original space. Visitors enter the lobby from the street through a series of sliding glass doors, which are sandblasted with the MoMA QNS logo. Exposed ductwork on the ceiling and polished concrete floors reveal the building's industrial origins. Once inside the lobby, visitors may proceed to the information desk to purchase a ticket, or they may ascend a ramp to a mezzanine overlooking the lobby, which houses a café and store.

A unique feature of the Maltzan-designed lobby is a stand-alone gallery directly behind the information desk. The walls of the gallery extend beyond the boundary created by its sloping floor, seeming to hover over the information desk. This flexible space will serve numerous functions. The inaugural installation includes *Projects 76: Francis Alÿs*, as well as a presentation of the five proposals for the Third Annual MoMA/P.S.1 Young

Architects Program. On view are drawings, computer renderings, and concept boards by the five finalists, including this year's winner William E. Massie. Additionally, IBM research has partnered with MoMA to create a walk-up-and-use learning system—also located in this gallery—that gives visitors unprecedented access to high-resolution images of thousands of works in the Museum's collection. This experimental, evolving project also incorporates game-like challenges that help visitors to develop a deeper understanding of modern art.

Maltzan's concept responds to an environment he describes as the "middle landscape" between the metropolis and the suburbs; it is a transitional zone that can be seen as a metaphor for this interim phase of the MoMA building project. The journey visitors take to MoMA QNS informs the design. Maltzan's innovative rooftop identification for MoMA QNS is a distinctive component of the building, particularly for visitors who arrive on the elevated 7 Local subway train. As they approach, rooftop panels bearing the letters of the MoMA logo come into view, and as the train pulls into the 33 Street station the letters come together to display the MoMA name and create a reinterpretation of a traditional Long Island City warehouse sign. Once on the street, visitors follow a patterned lighting element leading to the building entrance, a half block away.

### **Cooper, Robertson & Partners**

Cooper, Robertson & Partners (CRP), led by Scott Newman, designed the conservation laboratory; library and public reading room; collections, imaging, and framing facilities; offices; and storage space. The firm's involvement in the project began in 1996, when it assessed the Museum's future needs in preparation for the building project and began to address the overall master plan for the project. CRP was integral in selecting Yoshio Taniguchi as the architect for the new Museum of Modern Art and will serve as general consultant until the completion of the building project.

CRP recognized the potential of the QNS building to serve MoMA's long-term needs and designed every facet of the building's nonpublic space to best accommodate and maintain the Museum's collection. Skylights were designed for the conservation lab, providing Museum conservators with the best possible conditions to clean and repair works of art. All doorways in the art-handling spaces are 20 feet high, and double-height corridors are extra wide to ensure safe transport of large works. Art storage spaces are plentiful, allowing room for growth in MoMA's collection, and an extra-large freight elevator was specially installed for transportation of the art.

CRP also tailored the MoMA QNS office space for the approximately 125 staff who work in the building. A newly created mezzanine level houses several curatorial collections. The Museum's Library and Archives, also designed by CRP, include a well-lit, flexible space for more than 180,000 volumes, as well as a public reading room defined by a double-height ceiling and an arrangement of square windows looking out onto 33 Street.

### **The Move**

With the opening of MoMA QNS, the Museum completed one stage of a massive move of its collection, staff, and offices from Manhattan to Queens. When the move is complete this fall, nearly 100,000 pieces of artwork will

have been transported—approximately 575 paintings; 500 sculptures; 27,000 objects and artworks from the Architecture and Design Collection; and the Museum's entire collections of 43,000 prints and illustrated books, 6,200 drawings, and 21,000 photographs. The move from 53 Street to MoMA QNS has required some 385 truckloads of works of art, library and archival material, and equipment. Much of the collection will remain in storage at MoMA QNS even after the new Museum opens in midtown in 2005.

Of the Museum's 600-person staff, approximately 125 people work in the MoMA QNS building, some 225 work in an office building a few blocks away, and the rest remain in the various midtown Manhattan office buildings where they are now located.

Throughout the duration of the move, Museum telephone numbers will remain in the 212 area code, and the Museum's mailing address will continue to be 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019. A visitor center is located inside The MoMA Design Store at 44 West 53 Street, to distribute information and provide directions to MoMA QNS.

### **MoMA at the Gramercy Theatre**

The Museum of Modern Art is moving its Film and Media program to a new temporary home in the historic Gramercy Theatre on 23 Street in Manhattan, resuming its exhibitions in early October after a summer hiatus. The first exhibitions in the new venue will include an international film preservation festival, a *Richard Rodgers at the Movies* tribute celebrating the centenary of the composer's birth, and a retrospective of the films of French actress Delphine Seyrig (1932–1990).

Subsequent programs include a retrospective marking the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the French film magazine *Positif*, new films from Germany, the second annual *Documentary Fortnight* exhibition, and the 19<sup>th</sup> annual award-winning exhibition of British commercials from this year's British Advertising Broadcast Awards.

Admission to the new theater will be free upon presentation of a MoMA QNS ticket stub dated from the previous seven calendar days. A ticket stub from the Gramercy Theatre will also admit the bearer to MoMA QNS for up to seven days from its date of issue. Museum members may use their MoMA membership cards at the Gramercy Theatre to obtain tickets for free, as they did at the Museum. In addition, American Museum of the Moving Image, in Astoria, Queens, will welcome MoMA members to its theater free of charge from the beginning of June until the end of September, 2002, and MoMA will honor all Moving Image members with free admission at MoMA QNS.

### **MoMA Community Outreach**

The Museum's transition to Queens is an opportunity to strengthen and enhance its ties with a wide variety of Queens-based organizations, including cultural and educational institutions, and artist, business, and community groups. For example, MoMA will partner with the Queens Borough Public Library to present family programs at library locations in nearby Sunnyside and Corona (see separate release for details).

The Museum has hosted group tours from more than 60 Queens borough public, elementary, middle, and high schools over the years and will be increasing its interactions with local educational institutions, including the four high schools housed within LaGuardia Community College, as well as Grover Cleveland High School, P.S. 199, and P.S. 69. LaGuardia Community College will collaborate with the Museum to offer educational programs to its students and faculty. The Museum's education department will work closely with its counterpart at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center and continue to bring school groups to exhibitions at both venues.

The Museum will also host its Third Annual MoMA Family Picnic on Saturday, August 17, at MoMA QNS; families are invited to explore modern art, while enjoying music, entertainment, and refreshments.

### **P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center**

In 1999, MoMA became affiliated with P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center in Long Island City, Queens. The partnership provides the opportunity for both organizations to expand their exhibition programs and to collaborate on curatorial projects. P.S.1 is located just two stops on the number 7 subway from MoMA QNS. The new proximity will allow the institutions to continue to integrate their programming. In addition, P.S.1 has changed its days of operation to coincide with those of MoMA QNS.

Now in its third year, the MoMA/P.S.1 Young Architects Program is a joint competition that invites emerging architects to realize projects at P.S.1. William E. Massie, the 2002 winner, has realized his proposal for the project *Playa Urbana/Urban Beach*, which incorporates wading pools and shade elements in a refuge from the urban summer.

P.S.1 was founded in 1971 by Alanna Heiss as The Institute of Art and Urban Resources, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to the transformation of abandoned and underutilized buildings in New York City into exhibition, performance, and studio spaces for artists. Housed in a former school building, P.S.1 is one of the largest and oldest arts organizations in the United States solely devoted to contemporary art. Since 1997, P.S.1 has worked closely with Kunst-Werke Berlin, the contemporary art center of Berlin, collaborating on exhibitions, studio programs, and events.

### **The New Museum of Modern Art, Midtown Manhattan**

In midtown Manhattan, MoMA is in the process of expanding and redesigning the Museum, which will become a major new destination for New York City and the world when it reopens in 2005 in conjunction with MoMA's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. The new Museum of Modern Art is designed by acclaimed architect Yoshio Taniguchi, well known in Japan and worldwide for his beautiful designs. His elegant design for MoMA reflects the vitality of midtown Manhattan and engages the city with a block-through lobby connecting 53 and 54 streets.

The project accommodates MoMA's growing demand for the display of its preeminent permanent collection as well as for special exhibitions, public programming, and educational and scholarly resources. The

redesign significantly expands and reinterprets the midtown facilities, with visitors entering the exhibition area through spacious new skylighted galleries for contemporary art, affirming the importance of the art and artists of today. The Museum will feature architecturally distinctive exhibition spaces for displaying masterpieces of modern art, a soaring atrium, and a dramatic 30-foot-high lobby area with an expansive view of the restored Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden that reestablishes the historic garden as the heart of the Museum. The Museum's new building complex will also house exhibition galleries and a major center devoted to education and research, reflecting the Museum's dual priorities of exhibition and education. The spacious lobby will provide convenient access to all Museum services, including ticketing, information, coat check, retail, restaurant, theaters, and galleries.

Kohn Pedersen Fox, the international architecture firm based in New York City, is serving as executive architect on the project.

Visit [www.moma.org/momaqns](http://www.moma.org/momaqns) for information about MoMA QNS. For information on the Building Project visit [www.moma.org/momabuilds](http://www.moma.org/momabuilds).

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