

## For Immediate Release

April 17, 2009



### **SFMOMA'S LIVE-ART PROGRAM PRESENTS *TODAY IS NOT A DRESS REHEARSAL*, BY NEW HUMANS**

#### **Site-Specific Installation Activates Museum's Public Space**

For three days (May 10–12, 2009), the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's Schwab Room, part of SFMOMA's public atrium, will be transformed into a hybrid installation/film set by New York–based artist Mika Tajima (who often works collaboratively under the name New Humans). This site-specific project, entitled *Today Is Not a Dress Rehearsal*, creates a dynamic space for live performance, video, and sculpture. Featuring contributions from filmmaker Charles Atlas and philosopher Judith Butler, *Today Is Not a Dress Rehearsal* will be open to the public and free of admission.



New Humans, *Disassociate*, 2007 (performance view, featuring [left to right] Vito Acconci, C. Spencer Yeh, and Mika Tajima); photo: courtesy M. Tajima and Elizabeth Dee Gallery, NYC

Founded in 2003 by Mika Tajima (with a few rotating members that include other artists, musicians, and designers), New Humans is known for constructing multimedia installations that typically incorporate live performance elements and experimental music. Tajima, who was selected for the 2008 Whitney Biennial, works across genres, posing questions about the evolving nature of contemporary art production and exhibition, and exploring how viewers' expectations of these experiences are conditioned.

For SFMOMA, Tajima's set will consist of her sculptural objects (which double as scenery flats) and the accoutrements of film production, including lighting gear, dolly tracks, and sound equipment. In keeping with many of her previous installations, the panel-like modular structures made specifically for this project will be layered with prints of abstract patterns and graphic renderings by Tajima—this time echoing the iconic architecture and motifs of SFMOMA's Mario Botta–designed building. The sculptures function as both literal “flats” and as flat representations of the museum's spatial geometry.

Simultaneously, award-winning filmmaker and video artist Charles Atlas will be shooting the event and creating live-edit works, which will be projected in real time in the museum's Phyllis Wattis Theater, as well as onto the surfaces of the installation itself.

Special evening performances include an experimental lecture by philosopher Judith Butler—known for her seminal writings on cultural theory and contemporary politics—and a sound performance by New Humans. In addition, members of the Golden Gate Toastmasters (the local chapter of Toastmaster International, a public-speaking association) will perform speeches influenced by concepts of mirroring and repetition as interpreted through the myth of Echo and Narcissus. These spoken-word elements will be recorded live on the first day of the project and then played back and remixed as the installation evolves.

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When the set is not in active use by the artist/performers, the public will be able to view it—its ongoing transformation and everything “behind the scenes”—making transparent the process of collaborative art production, with its multiple takes and negotiations.

SFMOMA’s Live Art series has transformed the nature of the museum’s public programming, embracing the event-driven, performance-based aspect of much contemporary art. Encompassing a broad spectrum of programming—from intimate collaborations to provocative spectacles—Live Art supports direct interactions among artists, artworks, and communities and activates the museum’s spaces in new ways. Previous events in the series include William Kentridge’s *The Return of Ulysses*, Fritz Haeg’s *Animal Estates*, Eve Sussman’s *The Rape of the Sabine Women*, and *Weimar New York: A Golden Gate Affair*.

Support for Live Art at SFMOMA is provided by The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

### **TODAY IS NOT A DRESS REHEARSAL**

*Mika Tajima/New Humans*

*With filmmaker Charles Atlas*

Sunday–Tuesday, May 10–12, 11 a.m.–5:45 p.m.

The Schwab Room and Phyllis Wattis Theater, SFMOMA

### **EVENING PERFORMANCES**

#### **Monday, May 11, 7:30 p.m.**

With a lecture by Judith Butler and recorded speeches by the Golden Gate Toastmasters

#### **Tuesday, May 12, 7:30 p.m.**

With a noise performance by New Humans

**The installation and all evening events are free and open to the public.**

### **Media Contact:**

Robyn Wise, 415.357.4172, [rwise@sfmoma.org](mailto:rwise@sfmoma.org)

Libby Garrison, 415.357.4177, [lgarrison@sfmoma.org](mailto:lgarrison@sfmoma.org)

Sandra Farish Sloan, 415.357.4174, [ssloan@sfmoma.org](mailto:ssloan@sfmoma.org)

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**Museum hours:** Open daily (except Wednesdays): 11 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.; open late Thursdays, until 8:45 p.m. Summer hours (Memorial Day to Labor Day): Open at 10 a.m. Closed Wednesdays and the following public holidays: New Year’s Day, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, Christmas. The museum is open the Wednesday between Christmas and New Year’s Day.

**Koret Visitor Education Center:** Open daily (except Wednesdays): 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; open late Thursdays, until 8:30 p.m. Summer hours: Open at 10 a.m.

**New admission prices starting May 30, 2009:** adults: \$15; seniors and students: \$9; SFMOMA members and children 12 and under: free. Admission is free the first Tuesday of each month and half-price on Thursdays after 6 p.m.

SFMOMA is easily accessible by Muni, BART, Golden Gate Transit, SamTrans, and Caltrain. Hourly, daily, and monthly parking is available at the SFMOMA Garage at 147 Minna Street. For parking information, call 415.348.0971.

**Visit our website at [www.sfmoma.org](http://www.sfmoma.org) or call 415.357.4000 for more information.**

SFMOMA is supported by a broad array of contributors committed to helping advance its mission. Major annual support is provided by Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund, the Koret Foundation, and the Evelyn and Walter Haas Jr. Fund. First Tuesdays are always free, thanks to AT&T. Thursday Nights at SFMOMA are sponsored by Banana Republic. KidstART free admission for children 12 and under is made possible by Charles Schwab & Co. Inc.

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