

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Tel. 956-6100 Cable: Modernart

NO. 125
FOR RELEASE:
NOVEMBER 14, 1972

PROJECTS: LUIS FERNANDO BENEDIT, an exhibition consisting of two man-made environments for living organisms and a selection of related drawings, will be on view from November 14 through January 2, 1973, at The Museum of Modern Art.

Born in Argentina in 1937, Luis Fernando Benedit currently lives in Buenos Aires, where he works as an architect. His early paintings, produced between 1961 and 1967, included images of animals as well as architectural and mechanical figures. In 1967 he began to work with these elements in a literal and direct way by constructing environments for animals and plants.

The Museum exhibition, organized by Bernice Rose, Associate Curator of Drawings, includes Benedit's "Phitotron," an environment for plants, and a labyrinth for white mice. Each work occupies a separate gallery on the Museum's first floor. The "Phitotron" is a closed environment containing 70 tomato plants and 56 lettuce plants, which are automatically supplied with light and a chemical growth formula. The environment for mice is also self-contained, consisting of a maze, food source, material for burrowing, and an enclosed area for sleeping.

Benedit's work contrasts the carefully constructed plexiglas technical system of the man-made environment with the natural system of the living organisms it circumscribes and modifies. Benedit rejects the static work of art; fluctuation and variation are central to his work. His environments permit the observation of growth, change and repetition in the patterns of living organisms over a period of time.

Among Benedit's previous environments was his "Biotron," an aluminum and plexiglas construction which housed 4,000 bees, shown at the 1970 Venice Biennale. The insects had the choice of feeding from artificial flowers which dripped sugar

(more)

at the direction of a computer, or from actual flowers in a nearby garden. The bees preferred the artificial solution.

PROJECTS: LUIS FERNANDO BENEDIT is one of a series of exhibitions of recent work by contemporary artists, and is presented under the auspices of the Museum's International Council.

Further information available from Mark Segal, Assistant, and Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53 St., New York, NY 10019. Phone: (212) 956-7296, -7501.

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