

# The Museum of Modern Art

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PROJECTS: ROBERT WHITMAN, an exhibition of recent sculpture and related drawings, will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art from April 17 through May 23.

The four sculptures in the exhibition, never before shown, are constructed of upright wood planks or black cloth frames over which water flows continuously. A film image is projected on each of these wet "screens." By projecting the films in this manner, the artist enables the observer to perceive everyday images -- here, two dancers, a horizontal man, and a burning match -- in a way that is at once unexpected, mystifying, contradictory, and beautiful. Sounds are a part of each sculpture, both incidental noises of the running water and electric film projectors as well as tape recordings of a popular song.

Whitman is well known for the theater pieces and happenings he has been creating since 1960. His interest in time and performance is treated differently in the present sculptures which the spectator, as a non-participant, views as discrete objects with continuously visible images. The aesthetic functions in an infinite continuum articulated by the rhythms of the moving water and film. The realness of the projected objects is in tension with their film presence. In one sculpture there is the added contradiction of the large illusionistic image of a burning match imposed on a wet field. Our perceptions are challenged and directed as the artist creates a personal world with its own visual and intellectual realities.

Robert Whitman lives in New York, where he was born in 1935. He first began exhibiting in 1959 and has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions since then. He is best known for his happenings, films, and multi-media environments which employ complex technology.

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## FILM SERIES ARRIVING FROM JAPAN

PROJECTS: ROBERT WHITMAN continues the series of exhibitions designed to inform the public of recent researches and explorations in the visual arts. The exhibition is directed by Cora Rosevear, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Painting and Sculpture, and presented with partial financial assistance from the Creative Artists Public Service Program.

The Museum of Modern Art gratefully acknowledges the support of its exhibition program by the New York State Council on the Arts.

one of his major pictures, on Thursday evening, April 26, at 8:00 pm.

Considered as a whole, Shinoda's films present a view of Japanese society at crucial points in its history, as well as a view of the individual human condition. "For Shinoda," writes Joan Miller in an essay written for this series, "injustice appears endemic to the human condition." And Donald Richie, the Museum curator responsible for the Shinoda program, has written in his book Japanese Cinema: "The younger director [Shinoda] is interested in the patterns of men's lives and in the character of a man free enough and hopelessly doomed enough to be nihilistic in a rigidly repressive and obsessively codified world." Unlike Mizoguchi, who attempts to reconcile the disparity between duty and will, Shinoda adopts a pessimistic, fatalistic view of the conflict between the individual character and the constraints imposed on that character by tradition.

With respect to Japanese society, Shinoda frequently concentrates on moments of political and/or historical transition. "The Scandalous Adventures of Buraikan" and "Assassination," two of his finest works, are situated at distinct moments in the fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate during the mid-nineteenth century.

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Additional 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. (more)

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