

The Museum of Modern Art

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NO. 41

FOR RELEASE: May 30, 1973

PRESS PREVIEW: May 29, 2-4 p.m.

100 BOOTS HEAD EAST

Projects: 100 Boots by Eleanor Antin, a mailwork consisting of approximately 50 postcards of photographs of 100 black rubber boots in special, often dramatic or enigmatic situations, will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art from May 30 through July 8, when the boots themselves will conclude their peripatetic adventures with a stay in New York. In addition to the entire set of postcards, the exhibition will include photographic blow-ups of the boots' forays into New York. One entire gallery will be converted into the boots' New York "crash pad," complete with mattresses, sleeping bags, radio, and a front door equipped with a peep-hole and a chain lock.

Eleanor Antin conceived of 100 Boots as a means of circumventing some of the spatial and temporal limits imposed on an artist whose work is shown in a gallery situation. The piece has been executed during the past two-and-a-half years. The postcards have been mailed at irregular intervals, ranging from 3 days to 5 weeks, to 1000 people and institutions around the world.

Antin originally thought of 100 Boots as a picaresque novel in the manner of Huckleberry Finn or Kerouac's On the Road. However, she quickly saw its potential as a film "so I sold myself the movie rights." As more cards were produced she began to see them as highlighted frames from a lengthy movie serial such as "The Perils of Pauline." Each postcard includes a photograph of the boots (all photographs have been taken by Philip Steinmetz), a title for the particular adventure (e.g. "100 Boots on the Way to Church," "100 Boots at the Saloon," "100 Boots Taking the Hill"), and the date, time, and place at which the picture was taken.

Individual images were not necessarily mailed in the same sequence in which they

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were taken. Rather, the artist re-orders distinct events into a continuous narrative, the structure of which emerges with the distribution of the work over a period of time. The boots started in the establishment culture ("At the Bank," "In the Market"), then committed their first crime ("100 Boots Trespass"), after which they embarked on a series of adventures at deserted ranches, on river boats, in and out of odd jobs, and even had a love affair with a sad ending.

While most of the boots' adventures have taken place in California, where Ms. Antin lives, their exploits now conclude in New York City-- on the Staten Island Ferry, in Central Park, at a Greek night club, under the Brooklyn Bridge, and at various other locations -- before they settle in the Museum, where the complete record of their wanderings will be shown in its entirety for the first time. The exhibition is directed by Jane Necol, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Painting and Sculpture.

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

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