

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
November 1997

BRITISH FILM/VIDEO ARTIST STEVE MCQUEEN TO PREMIERE NEW WORK IN *PROJECTS* INSTALLATION AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Projects 62: Steve McQueen
November 28, 1997–February 10, 1998

British film/video artist Steve McQueen will debut his newest work, *Deadpan* (1997), in *Projects 62: Steve McQueen*, beginning November 28 at The Museum of Modern Art. The work, which will be shown in the Garden Hall Gallery, is created specifically for this exhibition. Like McQueen's earlier works, *Deadpan* continues the artist's exploration of what we see when we see film and video. *Deadpan* will be on display through February 10, 1998.

Deadpan is shot on 16mm film. As in McQueen's previous works, it is projected on video in large scale on the gallery wall—the live area of the image is 11 feet high by 15 feet wide. Viewers will have the impression of physically being inside McQueen's cinematic space. Using large-scale projection in this way, McQueen falls in the tradition of video artists such as Peter Campus, Dennis Oppenheim, and Vito Acconci, preferring to surround or sometimes dwarf the viewer with his work, blurring the line between observed and felt experience.

"Acconci, Campus, and Oppenheim were part of a group that denounced literary narrative. Instead, they integrated their moving images with performance, conceptual art, installation, and other artistic concerns of the time," said Barbara London, Associate Curator, Department of Film and Video, who organized the exhibition. "Though their revolutionary agendas fell short, they did succeed in redefining the way viewers

-more-

experience moving images. Steve McQueen, for his part, embraces the visual language of cinema, creating images that fill the wall like minimalist action painting. He belongs to a younger generation for whom nothing is deemed sacred or out of bounds."

A London native, McQueen trained in the freewheeling atmosphere of The Chelsea Art School and Goldsmith College in London and, briefly, at New York University. His work to date has been a direct and sometimes literal attempt to free himself from traditional cinematic constraints.

Catch (1997), for example, employs simple repetitive shots: first a full-figure McQueen standing on a patch of grass, then a rushing, blurred panorama of grass, trees, and sky as the camera is tossed to another person, then a second establishing shot of a different person, a woman, followed by another kinetic flurry as the camera is tossed back to McQueen. In this work, which premiered at Documenta X, the camera is used as a participant, and a manipulated (and manipulating) instrument. Though their subjects are quite different, *Bear* (1993), and *Five Easy Pieces* (1995) also emphasize the camera and make canny use of shot selection to imply weight, struggle, and judgment. A number of these works, and others, have been on display this year in Amsterdam, New York, Frankfurt, and Johannesburg, and are featured next spring in an exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

The Projects series is sponsored by Peter Norton.

The projector for this exhibition has been loaned by Electrohome, Ltd.

For more information, please contact Jessica Ferraro, Department of Communications at 212/708 9757. Visit our Web site at www.moma.org

No. 78