

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
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PROJECTS: JOAN FONTCUBERTA/PERE FORMIGUERA

June 18 - August 9, 1988

The Museum of Modern Art continues its series of PROJECTS exhibitions devoted to contemporary art with a mixed-media installation by Joan Fontcuberta and Pere Formiguera, two artists based in Barcelona. Organized by Catherine Evans, assistant curator in the Department of Photography, the installation, titled Fauna, continues through August 9.

In Fauna, Fontcuberta and Formiguera create an environment that recalls a natural history museum by presenting selections from the rediscovered archive of the "brilliant, if obscure, German zoologist," Dr. Peter Ameisenhaufen. Stuffed "specimens," photographs, audiotapes, drawings, pseudo-scientific descriptive texts in German, and a videotape are used as documentary "evidence" of the existence of fantastic animals. Among the the extraordinary hybrid species that comprise this exhibition are Alopex Stultus, which has the unique ability to camouflage itself as a shrub, and Micostrium Vulgaris, characterized as "a gregarious animal (with) a tremendous capacity for mimicry in semiaquatic environments."

In their work, the artists call into question the authority of the photographic medium and the assumed objectivity of scientific methodology and institutional display. In her brochure essay accompanying the exhibition, Ms. Evans writes, "Fontcuberta is concerned with the way in which data assumes meaning through its presentation, while Formiguera is interested in how the fantastic is codified by science, contending that what nature creates is more capricious than anything man can conjure."

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