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The Museum of Modern Art

TWO INSTALLATIONS BY GENERAL IDEA ARE ON VIEW FOR THE FIRST TIME IN NEW YORK AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Projects: General Idea

November 28, 1996–January 7, 1997

Two installations by the Toronto art collective General Idea are on view for the first time in the *Projects* gallery at The Museum of Modern Art from November 28, 1996, to January 7, 1997.

General Idea was formed in 1968 in Toronto by artists AA Bronson, Felix Partz, and Jorge Zontal and was prematurely dissolved due to the deaths of Zontal and Partz in 1994. During its prolific twenty-six years of professional and domestic partnership, General Idea created work marked by elusive meaning and poignant wit in a range of mediums, addressing both popular culture and mass-media formats—beauty pageants, television shows, popular magazines—as well as the work of other artists such as Yves Klein, Piero Manzoni, and Marcel Duchamp.

The Museum of Modern Art is presenting two installations that are central to the AIDS-related projects developed by the group since 1987—a time when relatively few artworks dealt specifically with AIDS—and that also rank among their most spectacular works. *One Day of AZT* (1991) displays the daily dose of AZT (then five units) as five human-size pills on the floor. Three hundred and sixty-five sets of five smaller pills, one for each day of the year, are arranged in monthly sequences along the walls, adding up to *One Year of AZT* (1991). Inducing a state of disembodied suspension, the numbing regularity and relentless repetition of the daily dose sets up a sad visual mantra that evocatively counts down the passing months. An undercurrent of tension derives from the friction between formal elegance, with its aestheticizing denial of the pills' function, and the pervasive aura of foreboding. Within a clinical, antiseptic gallery space, the serial geometric arrangement becomes reminiscent of Minimal art, while the appearance of the medication—a contrasting cobalt blue stripe over the white expansion—alludes to hard-edge abstractions.

A Web project by General Idea has been created in collaboration with the Museum and äda 'web on the occasion of *Projects: General Idea*. The project, available through MoMA's Web site at <http://12.3.56.5>, includes on-line animation and a free downloadable screen saver, and is sponsored by ArtAIDS, a project supported by Artec and the Arts Council of England.

Projects: General Idea was organized by Lilian Tone, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Painting and Sculpture. The *Projects* series is made possible by the Contemporary Exhibition Fund of The Museum of Modern Art, established with gifts from Lily Auchincloss, Agnes Gund and Daniel Shapiro, and Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Lauder; and grants from The Contemporary Arts Council and The Junior Associates of The Museum of Modern Art, and Susan G. Jacoby.

For further information or photographic materials, contact Uri Perrin,
Department of Communications, 212/708-9757.

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