

**THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART'S PERFORMANCE EXHIBITION SERIES
CONTINUES WITH ROMAN ONDÁK'S *MEASURING THE UNIVERSE***

MoMA Visitors Invited to Have Their Height Measured as Participants in Performance-Based Work

Performance 4: Roman Ondák

June 24–September 14, 2009

Contemporary Galleries, second floor

NEW YORK, June 11, 2009—The Museum of Modern Art presents the fourth installment of its Performance Exhibition Series with Roman Ondák's (Slovakian, b. 1966) *Measuring the Universe* (2007). The work, a recent acquisition by MoMA, will have its North American premiere beginning on June 24, 2009. *Measuring the Universe*, which was first enacted in the Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich, in 2007, is a performance-based work in which the height of each visitor is recorded on the gallery's wall by a Museum attendant, eventually creating a unique wall drawing and a visual record of thousands of museum visitors. *Measuring the Universe* is the second work solely based on performance to enter MoMA's collection, following the 2008 acquisition of Tino Sehgal's *The Kiss* (2003). The exhibition is organized by Klaus Biesenbach, Chief Curator, with Jenny Schlenzka, Assistant Curator for Performance, Department of Media and Performance Art, The Museum of Modern Art, and on view in the Contemporary Galleries on the second floor through September 14, 2009.

Klaus Biesenbach states: "Ondák is an important emerging artist who carries forward the transition of conceptual art coming out of Central Europe, and is known for installations, drawings, and performances that draw from this rich history. *Measuring the Universe* combines many of the characteristics in Ondák's oeuvre, most importantly the practice of involvement and participation with the spectator, collapsing the usual distinction between performer and audience, professional and amateur, production and reception."

The work is brought into existence by simple and minimal means: an empty white cube gallery, museum attendants who are equipped with black felt tip pens, and museum visitors. The interaction among these elements is scripted as follows: once a visitor enters the gallery, he/she is approached by a museum attendant who asks the visitors if he is interested in having his height measured. If the visitor agrees to participate, the attendant then marks the height with a black line onto the wall, and writes the visitor's first name and the date the measurement took place. This procedure is repeated continuously with every visitor who enters the gallery for the duration of the exhibition.

After a short period of time a distinctive wall drawing appears, consisting of the ghostly traces of thousands of visitors. The three dimensions of the gallery are eventually expanded by a fourth dimension: a recording of time.

The result can be understood in reference to others' works in MoMA's collection, including Sol LeWitt's wall drawings, which are similarly based on a set of simple instructions carried out by someone other than the artist, or Felix Gonzalez-Torres's *Untitled (Placebo)* (1991), which also converts the passive onlooker into an active participant by inviting visitors to pick up silver-wrapped candies from the Museum floor.

SPONSORSHIP:

The Performance Exhibition Series is made possible by MoMA's Wallis Annenberg Fund for Innovation in Contemporary Art through the Annenberg Foundation.

ABOUT MoMA'S PERFORMANCE EXHIBITION SERIES:

The Performance Exhibition Series is a two-year series of exhibitions that bring installations documenting past performances, live re-enactments of historic performances, and original performance pieces to various locations throughout the Museum. The series began with the gallery exhibition *Performance 1: Tehching Hsieh* in January 2009, and continued in March 2009 with *Performance 2: Simone Forti* and *Performance 3: Trio A by Yvonne Rainer*.

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Public Information:

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York, NY 10019

Hours: Wednesday through Monday: 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Friday: 10:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m.
Closed Tuesday

Museum Admission: \$20 adults; \$16 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; \$12 full-time students with current I.D. Free for children 16 and under. Free for members.
Admission includes admittance to Museum galleries and film programs.
Free admission during Target Free Friday Nights 4:00-8:00 p.m.

The public may call 212/708-9400 for detailed Museum information. Visit us on the Web at www.moma.org.