

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
October 1988

PROJECTS: KATE ERICSON AND MEL ZIEGLER

October 22 - November 29, 1988

The Museum of Modern Art continues its PROJECTS series with an indoor-outdoor installation by American artists Kate Ericson and Mel Ziegler from October 22 to November 29, 1988. Organized by Kathleen Slavin, curatorial assistant in the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books, Signature Piece focuses on the contributions of anonymous workers to the formation of areas in the Museum and its neighborhood.

The exhibition is composed of clear Plexiglas signs bearing the magnified first-name autographs of the individuals who have fabricated or prepared the materials that create the Museum's architectural setting. These signature panels are displayed on or next to fountain pipes, marble pavement, foliage, and glass, for example, recalling the production origins of the Museum's Garden Hall Gallery and Sculpture Garden, as well as buildings visible from the Garden.

Ziegler and Ericson's installations explore the ways in which individuality is expressed and suppressed in societies, in each case adopting language and materials related to the particular site. Signature Piece examines the ways in which socially productive work, including artistic efforts, are brought to public light. The use of the workers' first names is deliberately informal, calling attention to the standardized texts with which the Museum labels its collection. Ms. Slavin writes, "This focus on anonymous, nonartistic, skilled handiwork and its blending with artistic labors probes how we judge the known artists whose works attract a typical museum visit." While full names are indicated in the brochure, the first-name panels allow the

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viewer to imagine contexts of family, friends, labor, and culture in which first-name address is a prized ingredient.

Born one month apart, in late 1955 and early 1956, Ericson and Ziegler received B.F.A. degrees from the Kansas City Art Institute in 1978 and M.F.A. degrees from the California Institute of the Arts in 1982. Their artistic collaborations include America Starts Here, the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania (1988); The Conscious Stone, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C. (1988); If Landscapes Were Sold, DiverseWorks, Houston (1987); Stones Have Been Known to Move, White Columns, New York (1986); and House Monument, the Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art (1986).

PROJECTS, a series of exhibitions devoted to contemporary art, is made possible by generous grants from the Lannan Foundation and J.P. Morgan & Co. Incorporated. The program is directed by Linda Shearer, curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture.

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For more information or photographic materials, contact the Department of Public Information, 212/708-9750