

The Museum of Modern Art

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A NEW VIDEO INSTALLATION BY BOSTON-BASED VIDEO SCULPTOR DENISE MARIKA OPENS AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

**The Museum's Video Gallery Reopens with a New Work
That Uses Three-Dimensional and Time-Based Media
To Examine Issues of Vulnerability and Power**

More Weight
November 15, 1996–January 26, 1997
Garden Hall Video Gallery, Third Floor

The Museum of Modern Art reopens its third-floor Garden Hall Video Gallery on November 15, 1996, with a new installation by Boston-based video sculptor Denise Marika. Marika is well known for work that combines three-dimensional and time-based media; the installation, *More Weight*, features a video loop of lifesize nude figures projected onto a large rectangular structure made of metal and felt.

In the video a woman is carrying a man and struggling to keep from dropping him. She moves forward, gasping from the weight, trying to keep him in her arms. The only sound is of her labored breathing and footfalls. The man is motionless and vulnerable, arms and legs hanging, like a sleeping child. The drama plays out endlessly—with the woman working hard to avoid causing injury to herself or her charge—and is both disturbing and absurd.

The large structure on which the video is projected—roughly 12 feet high, 7 feet wide, and 3 feet deep—consists of layers of pink felt unevenly packed into an industrial metal frame.

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The felt adds color to the almost monochromatic images; at the same time, its folds and creases disfigure the projected bodies. While the sculptural materials and the emotional content of the video performance are wholly contemporary, the bodies recall nude figures from ancient Greece and Rome and the woman's struggle makes reference to that of Sisyphus.

"I am interested in the classicism present in Denise's work, and also in the idea of how video and performance merge with sculpture," says Barbara London, Associate Curator, Department of Film and Video, who organized the installation. "Denise's work is three-dimensional but, being time based, it has a strange quality that imposes itself on, and startles, the viewer."

More Weight continues Marika's aesthetic strategy of juxtaposing industrial materials and performances of intimate human activities. The latter usually focus on personal ritual: rocking, pacing, turning away, physically struggling. Marika then creates a sculptural form that physically encloses, shapes, or otherwise defines the video image.

"By projecting moving images onto steel I-beams, along a conveyor track, onto animal hides and latex swings," Marika says, "I am setting up a dialogue and a tension between image, motion, and sculptural form, physicalizing the territory of conflict, internal and external."

More Weight will be on exhibition through January 26, 1997.

Marika is a 1984 M.F.A. graduate of the University of California, Los Angeles. She has had recent one-person exhibitions at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and the Howard Yezerski Gallery in Boston, and the Arthur Roger Gallery in New York and New Orleans, and has been included in numerous group shows. She has also received several commissions from

city agencies. *Crossing*, her 1994 installation for the town of Brookline, Massachusetts, was the topic of much debate about public art.

More Weight is made possible with support from the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, The Contemporary Arts Council of The Museum of Modern Art, and the Panasonic Corporation. The installation itself is supported by the Howard Yezerski Gallery, Boston, with partial funding from the New England Film/Video Fellowship Program at the Boston Film/Video Council.

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For more information, for photographs, or to interview Denise Marika, who will be at The Museum of Modern Art to install her work from November 7 to November 11, please contact Graham Leggat, Film and Video Press Representative, at 212/708-9752.