

# Museum of Contemporary Art

# News

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## **MCA PRESENTS SPECIAL EXHIBITION *EXAMINING PICTURES:* *EXHIBITING PAINTINGS***

### **Exhibition of 56 artists links generations of painters**

The Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), Chicago, will present Examining Pictures: Exhibiting Paintings, a provocative analysis of international contemporary painting from July 24 through September 19, 1999. Examining Pictures: Exhibiting Paintings presents the work of 56 artists—including Laura Owens, Gary Hume, Richard Prince, Damien Hirst, and Udomsak Krisanamis—within an historical context, establishing links with works by artists of earlier generations, such as Andy Warhol, Sigmar Polke, Anselm Kiefer, Francis Bacon, and Ilya Kabakov. Each artist is represented by one work in the exhibition.

Establishing points of convergence and disruption between works separated by time, Examining Pictures: Exhibiting Paintings presents the viewer with a maze of memories, concepts, stories, and flashbacks on the subject of painting. Organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art and Whitechapel Art Gallery in London, the exhibition was curated by the MCA's Manilow Senior Curator Francesco Bonami and the Whitechapel's Head of Programming Judith Nesbitt.

"Examining Pictures looks at painting as the ultimate virtual space that in the last four decades has been challenged, attacked, dismissed and subverted, but never abandoned or forgotten," said Bonami. "At the heart of this exhibition is the conviction that painting has a particular importance, not just to artists, but within Western culture as an encounter with reality; a way of establishing a relationship between ourselves and the world around us."

The first work viewers will encounter in the exhibition is John Baldessari's text painting Examining Pictures (1967) from which the exhibition borrows its title. Its text asks: "What do pictures consist of?" and "What are they all about?" While basic, these questions are the starting point for an exhibition that analyzes the subject of painting and its evolution over the last four decades.

(more)

EXAMINING PICTURES/Page 2

Bringing together a range of work from the 1960s to the present, Examining Pictures: Exhibiting Paintings allows the viewer to see a butterfly painting by Damien Hirst presented alongside Electric Chair by Andy Warhol. Both Hirst and Warhol's paintings re-work the traditional still life, freezing the moment of death in the form of a painting.

The exhibition also brings together the work of the young Thai artist Udomsak Krisanamis and the Japanese painter On Kawara. Krisanamis' paintings are slow accretions of black ink over news print in which everything is shrouded except the "O's." Kawara's canvas simply states the date it was painted: "29 Feb 1989." Both artists use the medium of painting to reflect on time and duration.

Examining Pictures: Exhibiting Paintings will be presented in the North Exhibition Gallery on the second floor of the Museum. The exhibition will be accompanied by an 80-page full-color illustrated catalogue with essays by Bonami and Nesbitt. The catalogue will be available at **culturecounter**, the MCA's store and bookstore in May. The exhibition has been generously supported by Richard A. Lenon and Hortense Singer.

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The Museum of Contemporary Art is a non-profit tax-exempt organization. The MCA's exhibitions, programming and operations are member supported and privately funded through contributions from individuals, corporations, and foundations. Additional support is provided through the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and by American Airlines, the official airline of the Museum of Contemporary Art. The MCA is located at 220 E. Chicago Avenue, one block east of Michigan Avenue. Effective June 1, 1999, the Museum and sculpture garden are open on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. The Museum is closed Monday. Suggested general admission is \$7, and \$4.50 for students and seniors. Members and children 12 years of age and under are admitted free. Admission is free on Tuesdays. Marshall Field's Free Tuesdays at the MCA are generously sponsored by Field's. Information about MCA exhibitions, programs, and special events is available on the MCA website at <http://www.mcachicago.org>.