



Program Introduces New Art Works Installed at Unexpected Locations throughout Museum



Art Encounters commissions artists to paint and transform the Museum's stairwells. Photo: Richard Barnes.

NEW YORK, NY.- Continuing to introduce innovative art commissions at its recently opened facility, the Museum of Arts and Design announced today the launch of a new partnership with Benjamin Moore & Co., establishing a special commissioning initiative: Art Encounters.

Art Encounters commissions artists to paint and transform the Museum's stairwells, creating opportunities to exhibit art in unusual locations throughout the twelve floor building. Artist Mary Temple is the first artist to participate in the program. Each artwork will remain four to six months at the Museum.

Mary Temple creates illusions of light by applying latex paint to walls and wood stain to floors. Her commission, *First Week*, is a painted trompe l'oeil installation which features a shard of delicate light with shadows of the trees that surround the Museum and is based on a visit the artist made to the museum in early spring. Regarding her utilization of trompe l'oeil, the artist has said, "By puzzling the physical senses, the painting celebrates the pleasure of trying to understand those things just outside the grasp of physical intelligence." *First Week*, installed at the east landing of the 4th floor stairwell, will be on view until December 30, 2009. Two other artists who will participate in Art Encounters are sculptor Jackie Ferrara and painter Odile Donald Odita.

"We like to surprise our visitors by showing art in unexpected locations within the Museum," states Holly Hotchner the Museum's Nanette L. Laitman Director. "These new art works will draw visitors to areas in the Museum they would otherwise not explore, adding to the active use of our great, new facility. Our stairwells are a perfect "canvas" for these distinctive artistic expressions. We are grateful to partner with Benjamin Moore

& Co., a partnership that emphasizes creativity and innovation, and we look forward to a magical transformation of our stairwells."

"Benjamin Moore is thrilled to support the Museum of Art and Design's vision of showcasing art in distinctive ways, in unexpected places," noted Dan Calkins, Benjamin Moore's Market General Manager. "And our paint is the perfect creative and color delivery medium to allow for this artistic expression. We hope all visitors will uncover these innovative surprises."

A vital part of the Museum's mission is to continue its commitment to working with living artists through its programs and exhibition. The Museum provides opportunities to exhibit newly commissioned work at the Museum's galleries and in the Open Studios, the Museum engages contemporary artists to share creative processes with visitors.

Art Encounters will be a valuable addition to the Museum's program of installing art at unexpected places throughout the Museum. Currently these include Ruth Duckworth's *Untitled*, 1991, an abstract ceramic wall relief installed at the lobby adjacent to the Museum's theater (a gift of the artist, Thea Burger, and Howard Oberlander); El Anatsui's *Soleme*, a shimmering tapestry made entirely of foil from cast-off aluminum bottle tops (a promised gift of Aviva and Jack Robinson) and Olga de Amaral's wall hanging, *Tierra y Oro #11* (a gift of Arlene and Harvey Caplan). Installed in the Store and the Museum's foyer are two crystal chandeliers, Yves Behar's *Mini Voyage* and Tord Boontje's *Blossoms*, both originally designed for the Swarovski Crystal Palace. In the windows of the 3rd floor stairwells, the Museum showcases its splendid collection of goblets by makers including Dale Chihuly, Lino Tagliapietra, Beth Lipman and others, and on the 2nd floor stairwell Judith Schachter's *Seeing is Believing*, a site-specific stained-glass installation, is permanently installed.

The Museum's inventive exhibitions and programs have brought nearly 300,000 visitors to the Museum since its grand opening in September, 2008, including first-time visitors from throughout the region as well as cultural tourists from around the world, and has grown its membership to include 3,500 new members. The Museum has collaborated with a range of distinguished artists and designers, allowing visitors to watch, learn and hear from such luminaries as musician Wynton Marsalis, authors Salman Rushdie and Adam Gopnik, designers Karim Rashid, Hella Jongerius, Jonathan Adler and Paula Scher, and artists Marek Cecula and Klaus Moje, among others.

Since opening in its new location, the Museum has been acknowledged with numerous awards, including the prestigious Merit Award from the AIA New York, honoring architect Brad Cloepfil's (AWA) design of the new building; and graphic design from the Art Directors Club and the Association of American Museums. The Arts & Business Council honored the Museum with an Encore Award for its outstanding corporate partnership with Steelcase Inc.; The Store at MAD was named "Retail Store of the Year" by Chain Store Age.

Museum of Arts and Design | Wynton Marsalis | Salman Rushdie | Adam Gopnik | Karim Rashid | Hella Jongerius | Jonathan Adler | Paula Scher | Marek Cecula | Klaus Moje |