

The Museum of Modern Art

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NO. 69-D

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, July 30, 1970

COMPUTER PRINT-OUT MAKES NINE FOOT COLUMN IN MUSEUM SHOW

A computer print-out of all the digits between zero and one, stacked in a column more than nine feet high and weighing 500 pounds, is on view at The Museum of Modern Art in a current exhibition called INFORMATION. The work of Siah Armajani, a Persian-born artist now living in Minneapolis, "Number Between 0 and 1" is accompanied by three documentary photographs. The column consists of 25,974 pages, representing 28,571 hours of print-out time.

Armajani, who came to this country in 1960 when he was 21, has had a one man exhibition at the Walker Art Center, shown "Art by Telephone" at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, and is now designing a 21st century community in Jackson, Minnesota.

In INFORMATION, Armajani is also represented by "North Dakota Project," photographs and photostats documenting his proposal for a tower to be built on the eastern border of North Dakota which will be high enough to cast a shadow across the entire length of the state to its western border.

INFORMATION, an international report on recent activity of young artists, will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art through September 20. Selected by Kynaston McShine, Associate Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, the exhibition and catalog contain work by more than 150 men and women from 15 countries including artists from Argentina, Brazil, Canada, and Yugoslavia. Many are being shown in this country for the first time, although their work is known abroad.

Several pieces in the exhibition can only be realized with the active participation of people either in or outside the Museum. Stig Broegger (Denmark) has placed low wooden platforms around the galleries and in other parts of the city and metropolitan area; the exhibition includes photographs of people's reactions to these objects -- using them or watching others use them.

(more)

Group Frontera (Argentina) has set up a television tape recording booth in the Museum; visitors answer questions and not only become the subject of TV video tape recording, but also watch themselves live and on delayed tape on TV screens in the galleries. Poems, selected by Giorno, have been recorded and can be heard on phones in the galleries or by calling (212) 956-7032 from anywhere. Hans Haacke is polling Museum visitors. He has provided two voting boxes with photo-electric counters, ballots for each visitor to answer yes or no or a question referring to a current socio-political issue. Oiticica (Brazil) has constructed a 12-foot high "nest" structure on, and in which, he invites the public to climb, rest, sit. "You can say it is a 'leisure proposition' using different sorts of materials which are not important as such...but in the way they can be used during the exhibition."

"The general attitude of the artists in this exhibition," Mr. McShine comments... enables us to participate, quite often as in a game; at other times it seems almost therapeutic, making us question ourselves and our responses to unfamiliar stimuli. The constant demand is a more aware reaction to our natural and artificial environments... These artists are questioning our prejudices, asking us to renounce our inhibitions and if they are reevaluating the nature of art, they are also asking that we reassess what we have always taken for granted as our accepted and cultural conditioned aesthetic response to art...

"The activity of these artists is to think of concepts that are broader and more cerebral than the expected 'product' of the studio. With the sense of mobility and change that pervades their time, they are interested in ways of rapidly exchanging ideas, rather than embalming the idea in an 'object'. However, the idea may reside on paper or film."

The increasing use of the mail, telegrams, and telex machines for transmission of works themselves and of ideas is represented in the work of many artists in the exhibition. Christine Koslov shows only a telegram; N. E. Thing, Co., Ltd., (Ian Baxter, President), is transmitting images from Canada by telex and telecopier into the galleries during the run of the show, as well as exhibiting 27 photographs of labeled ART (aesthetically rejected thing) or ACT (aesthetically claimed thing).

Art and Project, founded in Amsterdam in 1968, is represented entirely by copies of the Bulletin they publish. Vito Acconci has set up a post office box for all his mail in the galleries which he calls "Service Area." The artist says, "the piece is

performed (unawares) by the postal service, as the mail travels to the Museum, and by the senders of the mail, wherever they happen to be. I perform the piece actively by going to the Museum to pick up my mail." New York Graphics Workshop urges visitors to send a self-addressed stamped envelope if they wish to receive "something" at the close of the exhibition. Paul Pechter is distributing handbills stating that anyone wishing to locate his contribution -- randomly placed, unlabelled devices -- may receive exact information on their whereabouts by sending him a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

More than 40 films, ranging in length from three minutes to eight hours, are shown on Olivetti's "information machine" or "visual jukebox" in the galleries. Under this umbrella-like structure, people stand and watch 40 individual screens. Many of the films are being shown in the Museum auditorium at noon on Wednesdays throughout the course of the show.

The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art made the film section of the INFORMATION show possible, while Olivetti lent the machine for the gallery screenings. E. J. Barnes and Co., provided technical aid and advice, J. C. Penney, Co., Inc., provided expertise and equipment, ITT World Communications provided Telex machines, Xerox Corporation, Stamford, Connecticut, provided a telecopier. The New York City Transit Authority provided space outside the Museum for Daniel Buren's wordless posters.

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