

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
April 1987

PROJECTS: MIKE GLIER

May 9 - July 12, 1987

The Museum of Modern Art continues its PROJECTS series with an installation by American artist Mike Glier, opening May 9, 1987. Organized by Laura Rosenstock, assistant curator in the Department of Painting and Sculpture, The Third Sketch of Chernobyl is a trompe-l'oeil wall drawing that incorporates architectural elements of the Museum's Garden Hall and Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden. The mural combines imagery from nature with the political subject matter for which the artist is best known.

Responding specifically to the physical characteristics of the Museum, Glier uses the ten-foot span of the windows and arcade facing the Sculpture Garden and the foot-wide I-beams that divide them as modules for organizing his wall drawing. He applies chalk and charcoal directly to the gallery wall, which he washes down to achieve subtle gradations in tone and partially erases by overpainting with wall-colored paint. This method, together with his graphic skill and assurance, allows Glier to combine an improvisational, gestural style of drawing with more carefully worked-out compositions.

In The Third Sketch of Chernobyl, Glier expresses the destructive force of radioactivity through the image of one man carrying another in an environment of unnaturally enlarged vegetation. Ms. Rosenstock writes, "This wall drawing, which is less overtly political and more melancholy than Glier's earlier work, is characterized by a pervasive sense of mystery and foreboding that is enhanced by the incongruous juxtaposition of a rational, serene setting with

- more -

one of nuclear disaster. Through its abnormal scale, its sense of unnatural silence, and its rendering of immense distances, Glier's work realizes a terrifying, apocalyptic vision."

Glier builds upon a tradition of painting on walls that extends from cave paintings and Renaissance frescoes to today's graffiti art. Particularly influenced by such artists as Sol LeWitt and Jonathan Borofsky, he first began drawing on walls in response to his conviction that art address issues of social significance. His graphic black-and-white images evoke newspaper photographs and cartoon illustration, reinforcing the immediacy and urgency of his themes.

Mike Glier, who was born in Fort Thomas, Kentucky, in 1953, received a B.A. from Williams College in 1976 and an M.A. from Hunter College in 1979. In the late seventies, he joined Collaborative Projects, Inc. (Colab), an artists' organization committed to social change and political involvement. Recent individual exhibitions have taken place at Washington Project for the Arts, Washington, D.C. (1986); the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia (1986); and the Barbara Gladstone Gallery, New York (1985). He has also participated in group exhibitions here and abroad.

PROJECTS, an exhibition series devoted to the work of contemporary artists, is made possible by generous grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Lannan Foundation, and the Wallace Funds, established by the founders of Reader's Digest. MIKE GLIER is followed by PROJECTS: MICHAEL YOUNG (July 23 - September 15, 1987).

* * *

No. 42

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