

The Museum of Modern Art

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BEN FRANKLIN DREAMS THE NEW WORLD

March 8 - May 12, 1991

A multi-media video installation by Philadelphia artist Peter Rose opens at The Museum of Modern Art on March 8, 1991. An homage to the celebrated statesman, linguist, and inventor, Ben Franklin, the work invents a set of contemporary images that "reconstruct" Franklin's ideas about electricity, women, mischief, invention, research, politics, and language. **BEN FRANKLIN DREAMS THE NEW WORLD** was commissioned by the City of Philadelphia in 1990 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Franklin's death. It remains on view in the Museum's third-floor video gallery through May 12.

The installation consists of an informal sitting area complete with coffee table and small monitor, flanked by three large monitors on pedestals. For the piece, Rose has constructed a typology of Franklin's profoundly varied interests and activities, drawn from Carl Van Doren's seminal biography. A color-coded reference index corresponds to each of the seven main ideas expressed in the images on the two flanking monitors.

As part of the Museum's VIDEO VIEWPOINTS series, Peter Rose presents the lecture, "Man, Woman, Birth, Death, Infinity," on March 11 at 6:30 p.m. in the Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 2.

Over the last twenty-five years, Rose has worked with performance, installation, videotape, and film to explore his concerns with the structure of language and thought. Since 1971 he has served as a professor in the Film

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Department of the Philadelphia College of Art. Rose has received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and the Guggenheim Foundation. His work has been exhibited at the Centres Georges Pompidou, Paris; the American Museum of the Moving Image, New York; the Chicago Art Institute; the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

BEN FRANKLIN DREAMS THE NEW WORLD was organized by Barbara London, assistant curator, Video, Department of Film. The Museum's video programs are made possible by grants from the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the MacArthur Foundation, and with the support of the Sony Corporation of America.

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For further information or video stills, contact the Department of Public Information, 212/708-9750.