

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
May 1995

PROJECTS: PAUL McCARTHY

June 1 - July 18, 1995

A new video work and installation by American performance artist Paul McCarthy (b. 1945) is the subject of the next **PROJECTS** exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art, on view from June 1 to July 18, 1995. Organized by Fereshteh Daftari, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Painting and Sculpture, **PROJECTS: PAUL McCARTHY** includes a work created specially for this exhibition in which McCarthy explores stereotypes about artists and the art world.

Since the late 1960s and early 1970s, McCarthy has been active in performance and video work, creating raw, powerful and often frenzied vignettes of Beckett-like absurdity that unveil primeval instincts and taboo gestures. Incorporating such foodstuffs as mayonnaise and hamburger meat and items including stuffed animals and dolls as "paint" and props, McCarthy's art is irreverent and transgressive. His performances have involved impersonations, transsexuality, and parodies drawn from popular culture.

McCarthy's work offers skewed identities, parodies of authority figures, and demented family relationships. Among his performance pieces are *Meat Cake, Yum, Yum* (1974), an early exploration of gender, as well as body painting with ketchup and raw meat; the *Death Ship* series (1981-83), featuring a protean sea captain; *Bossy Burger* (1991), shown as the video documentary of a crazed television cooking show exhibited on monitors adjacent to its ravaged

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performance set; and *Heidi* (1992), a video collaborative reworking of the children's classic novel with the artist Mike Kelley. McCarthy has also transformed the frantic agitations of his performances into mechanized sculptural tableaux, as in *Gardens* (1991), an installation shown in "Helter Skelter" in Los Angeles (1992).

A native of Utah, now based in California, Paul McCarthy received a B.F.A. from the San Francisco Art Institute (1969), and an M.F.A. in the interdisciplinary program in art and film from the University of Southern California (1973). His work has been exhibited widely in the United States and Europe.

PROJECTS, a series of exhibitions devoted to the work of contemporary artists, is made possible by generous grants from the Lannan Foundation, The Bohlen Foundation, and The Contemporary Arts Council and The Junior Associates of The Museum of Modern Art.

The next exhibition in the series is **PROJECTS: CARRIE MAE WEEMS**, on view from October 26, 1995, through January 2, 1996.

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