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For Immediate Release.

MCASB Opens Two New Exhibitions in Main Space

Exhibitions: *Rimini Protokoll: City as Stage* and **Bloom Projects Exchange Series:** Bean Gilsdorf, *Soft Actor*

Opening reception: January 21, 2017, 6 - 8 pm

Exhibitions on view: January 22, 2017 - April 30, 2017

Santa Barbara, CA - Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara presents *Rimini Protokoll: City as Stage*, an exhibition of two major works by the internationally-renowned Berlin-based artist collective, Rimini Protokoll, that invites audiences to actively delve into topics of how we define local community and national identity. In the Bloom Projects gallery, MCASB features Bean Gilsdorf in a solo exhibition organized in collaboration with Art Practical, an online art publication based in San Francisco, as part of the **Bloom Projects Exchange Series**.



Rimini Protokoll, 100% Yogyakarta, performed at Concert Hall Taman Budaya, Yogyakarta, 2015, Courtesy Goethe-Institut Indonesien. Photo: Berto Gesit

Rimini Protokoll: City as Stage

As the first US museum to organize an exhibition of the work of Helgard Haug, Stefan Kaegi and Daniel Wetzel, collectively known as Rimini Protokoll, MCASB has commissioned two adaptations of their participatory theater works. *100% City* is a large-scale, immersive video installation that vibrantly tackles issues of statistics, challenging traditional spatial, cultural, and political divides that inform how populations of people are represented and understood. The videos feature documentation from 23 performances that have happened around the globe, in which 100 everyday citizens of a particular city perform alternative demographies on stage, telling their stories and expressing their views on a broad range of topics, including aging, warfare, migration, and relationships. Each performance presents, as Rimini Protokoll describes, “a gathering that is a city, a group just beginning to experience itself, a choir that has never practiced, an impossible entity with many faces, assembled into ever-changing new group pictures...Who is missing? Who thinks they might give answers on stage that are different from the ones they'd give in response to a telephone survey or in the voting booth?”

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And what have the statistics failed to record? Who thinks that this city is different because they are a part of it?" 100% City raises a number of compelling questions about how we perceive and perform notions of identity and community in a globalized world, while revealing intricate complexities of city populations, and of ourselves, that are often seemingly invisible or overlooked until people come together and make them known.

An additional component of the exhibition is an off-site performance series by Rimini Protokoll, titled *Home Visit USA*, which will involve audience members experiencing cultural exchanges with strangers in improvised situations taking place within the intimate setting of a living room. Local community members will host gatherings of 15 people at their homes, who will play a lively game focused on ever-changing ideas of what defines our country, doing so in a way that creates a vibrant conversational atmosphere where points of view and stories are shared freely. *Home Visit USA* premieres at MCASB as Rimini Protokoll's new US version of their *Home Visit Europe* performance which has previously toured to 22 international cities, and will take place in Santa Barbara on the following dates in 2017: January 20, February 16, March 16, and April 20. Both *Home Visit USA* and 100% City address questions that are central to Rimini Protokoll's broader theatrical work, such as, what factors make us feel a sense of belonging in our city and how reliable are the sources of information that represent who we are as a population?

These two works extend from a long history of Rimini Protokoll's participatory theater that often incorporates site-specific installation, sculpture, architecture, and video. The artists, who began collaborating in 2000, are known for productions that directly address complex real-life issues, creating semi-scripted situations that allow for exploration to happen amongst participants. One key element to all of their work is activating audiences as agents who play a role in the unfolding of each performance, whether that performance involves following the routes of cargo transport drivers or navigating the globalized world of the arms industry. Audience members become the actors, expressing their own opinions, making decisions, and creating their own journeys. Often by way of such diverse personal narratives and group activities that delve into broader societal topics, Rimini Protokoll's work prompts us to reconsider the logic and criteria we use to inform our worldviews.

Rimini Protokoll (composed of Helgard Haug, Stefan Kaegi and Daniel Wetzel) is a Berlin-based artist collective whose work is presented and toured around the world, often appearing in public spaces, renowned theater venues, museums, and commissioned by major festivals including Festival d'Avignon, FR; Singapore International Festival of Arts; Territory Festival Moscow, RU; D-CAF Cairo, EG; Melbourne Town Hall, AU; Skirball Center for the Performing Arts, NY; and Walker Art Center, MN. They have received numerous prestigious awards including Faust Theatre Prize in 2007; Silver Lion of the Biennale for Performing Arts in Venice in 2011; Excellence Award of the 17th Japan Media Festival in 2014; and the Swiss Grand Prix of Theatre in 2015.

Exhibition curator: Brooke Kellaway

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From left to right: Bean Gilsdorf, *DoubleDouble RR*, 2015, Wool and polyester, 87 x 66 in., Courtesy the Artist. Bean Gilsdorf, *The Final Roles*, 2015, Wool and polyester, 20 x 25 in., Courtesy the Artist.

Bloom Projects Exchange Series: Bean Gilsdorf, *Soft Actor*

In collaboration with Art Practical, an online art publication based in San Francisco, CA, MCASB presents a solo exhibition by artist and writer, Bean Gilsdorf. The exhibition will expand on a recent series of work produced by Gilsdorf that focuses on a history of celebritized U.S. political figures, specifically those with a Hollywood past. The newly-commissioned textile wall pieces are centered around former president Ronald Reagan. Interested in how the media and show business continue to infiltrate the realm of politics, the artist brings attention to the image-making industry's transmission of certain symbols of power and fame through an examination of specific motifs and idiosyncrasies such as a hairdo or a handshake. The artist's rendering of such popular images in our nation's history—circulated on news and entertainment channels and in mass-market history books—offers a lens through which we can critically examine how we mythologize presidential history, an especially relevant topic in the midst of the 2016 presidential election.

Gilsdorf's work has been included in exhibitions at Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts (San Francisco, CA); American Textile History Museum (Lowell, MA), and the Holter Museum of Art (Helena, MT), as well as exhibition spaces in Poland, England, Italy, China, and South Africa. She has been nominated for SECA Award (SFMOMA, San Francisco), and for the Anonymous Was A Woman Award (New York). Gilsdorf received her BA from Bard College at Simon's Rock, and her MFA from the California College of the Arts. She was a 2011-2012 Graduate Fellowship Resident at the Headlands Center for the Arts (San Francisco, CA), and has participated in residencies at Kala (Berkeley, CA), Cannonball (Miami, FL), and the Banff Centre (Banff, AB).

This exhibition is part of MCASB's exchange exhibition series that takes place in the museum's Bloom Project exhibition gallery, a space that, for over a decade, continues to feature new commissions and experimental projects by regional, national, and international emerging or under-recognized artists. The series presents solo exhibitions focused on programmatic collaborations with small-to mid-sized "off-centered" art organizations in cities across the globe. While bringing increased visibility to vibrant yet less broadly known artistic contexts, the exhibitions generate dialogue on innovative and localized approaches to display, communication, publishing, and audience development.

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About Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara:

Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara (MCASB) is a non-profit, non-collecting museum dedicated to the exhibition, education, and cultivation of the art of our time. Formerly Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum (CAF), MCASB is the premier venue for contemporary art between Los Angeles and San Francisco. MCASB is located at the Paseo Nuevo Shopping Center Upper Arts Terrace in downtown Santa Barbara, CA. With the opening of the MCASB Satellite @ Hotel Indigo Santa Barbara in February of 2012, MCASB becomes one museum with two locations. Located in the Hotel Indigo Santa Barbara at 121 State Street, the MCASB Satellite space features yearlong exhibitions of stimulating contemporary artworks.

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