

For immediate release

ANN HAMILTON

the body and the object: 1984-1997

and *mattering*

at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

Montréal, October 7, 1998. From October 9, 1998 to January 17, 1999, the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal will present the exhibition *Ann Hamilton – the body and the object: 1984-1997* and *mattering*. The exhibition is divided into two parts. The first comprises a group of 45 works, entitled *the body and the object: 1984-1997*, made up of photographs, installations, videos and a CD-ROM. The installation *mattering* forms the second part of the exhibition.

Ann Hamilton

Ann Hamilton is known around the world for her works tinged with poetry and sensuality, at once strange and captivating. Entering Hamilton's world means letting ourselves be carried away by our senses and our imagination. Water, honey, birds, burnt paper, teeth, organza, coins, candles: the elements of her works might recall rituals that envelop and mesmerize us. The sometimes phenomenal quantity of artifacts that go into the composition of her installations establishes a community made up of friends, members of the artist's family, students, workers and volunteers. The multidisciplinary of Hamilton's work in such diverse fields as video, installation, photography, sound and performance make her one of the most accomplished artists of her generation. Because of the content of her work, the logistics involved, and its sense of excess, it has often been compared to such influential figures in contemporary art as Joseph Beuys, Christo and Bill Viola.

Born in Lima, Ohio, in 1956, American artist Ann Hamilton was trained in sculpture and textile design. From 1985 to 1991, she taught at the University of California, Santa Barbara. In 1992, she moved to Columbus, Ohio, where she continues to live and work. Since her first performance in New York in 1984, she has produced more than 20 in situ installations, along with video and audio works. She has taken part in more than 70 solo and group exhibitions all over the world: at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, the Dia Center for the Arts and the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Tate Gallery in London and, closer to us here, the Power Plant in Toronto. This is the artist's first exhibition in Montréal.

Ann Hamilton was invited to the international biennale in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 1991, and the Sydney Biennale in Australia in 1994. She participated in the third biennale of contemporary art in Lyon in 1995. In 1999, Hamilton will represent the United States at the Venice Biennale, the world's leading contemporary art event.

the body and the object: 1984-1997

The works that make up this part of the show come from the travelling exhibition *the body and the object: 1984-1996*, organized by the Wexner Center for the Arts, The Ohio State University, Columbus. The exhibition covers the last 12 years in the artist's production, and comprises photographs, artifacts, videos and sound pieces from her installations created between 1984 and 1996. For the Montréal presentation, three recent works have been added: *bearings*, 1996, *scripted* and *slaughter*, both from 1997. The show also includes an interactive CD-ROM recreating 10 in situ installations produced by the artist all over the world in the last 12 years.

The title *the body and the object* refers to a series of black and white photographs dating from 1984 to 1993 which acted somewhat as sketches for future installations. These photographs show the artist with everyday objects: a sheaf of wheat, a shoe, some paper, a length of material, etc. The "chance" encounter of the artist and these objects gives rise to powerful, haunting images, quite like surrealist poems.

mattering

Beneath a great wave of orange silk, peacocks wander freely about the room among the spectators. An assistant perched on a mast that pierces the silk winds a blue typewriter ribbon around their fingers. This is *mattering*, a monumental work specially selected by artist Ann Hamilton for Montréal, city of the textile and fashion industry. In Lyon, where the installation was first shown, critics wrote that it was "an invitation to tranquillity and freedom, a unique opportunity to open wide the shutters of our sensory intimacy."

A publication on the in situ installation *mattering* will be available on October 30 at Olivieri and other bookstores. In addition to an essay on the installation, by Chief Curator Paulette Gagnon who was responsible for the exhibition, the 80-page book (in French and English) contains 16 colour reproductions.

Lecture by Ann Hamilton on October 8

Ann Hamilton will give a lecture on various aspects of her work, on Thursday, October 8, at 5 p.m. sharp. Latecomers will not be admitted.

The exhibition *the body and the object: Ann Hamilton 1984-1997* and accompanying CD-ROM are presented through the generous support of the Wexner Center Residency Award Program, the National Endowment for the Arts, a U.S. federal agency, the Greater Columbus Arts Council, the Ohio Arts Council, Arcorp Inc. and the Wexner Center Foundation. Production of the CD-ROM was made possible by the invaluable collaboration and generosity of Resource Marketing Inc.

This presentation received financial support from the Canada Council for the Arts and Pentacom stratégie-créativité.