

PRESS RELEASE
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Exhibition
Sympathy for the Devil: Art and Rock and Roll Since 1967
at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal
October 10, 2008 to January 11, 2009

Montréal, September 24, 2008. The Musée d'art contemporain will be literally electrified this fall by the exhibition ***Sympathy for the Devil: Art and Rock and Roll Since 1967***. The title is taken from the eponymous Rolling Stones song. Montréal is the only stop in Canada and the Northeast for this exhibition, which will run from October 10, 2008 to January 11, 2009.

Organized by Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art, *Sympathy for the Devil* examines the history of the relationship between avant-garde art and rock music over the past forty years. From Andy Warhol's legendary involvement with The Velvet Underground in New York in 1967 to the dazzling 2007 installation *Pinball Wizard* and *The Byrds (Love in a Void)* by British artist Jim Lambie, *Sympathy for the Devil* is the most comprehensive presentation ever—including artworks, album cover design, music videos and other materials—of work that has emerged from the intersection of these two cultures.

The exhibition comprises over 100 works (installations, sculptures, paintings, drawings, videos, photographs) produced by sixty artists and collectives, subdivided into six themes corresponding to the music scenes in New York, the U.K., continental Europe, the West Coast (particularly Los Angeles), the U.S. Midwest and the rest of the world.

An extensive program of activities is planned to accompany this major event (see the attached *In Connection with the Exhibition*).

Journey through the exhibition

New York

From the early 1960s on, New York was in the forefront of the convergence of art and rock music. Andy Warhol's studio, known as The Factory, became a hub of the city's underground cultural scene in the late sixties. Warhol collaborated with artists working well outside the mainstream of current pop music, and offered them heightened visibility and a way to merge art and rock. His *Screen Tests* films, with Lou Reed, Maureen Tucker, John Cale and others, are part of the exhibition. Later, in the following decade, punk, New Wave and No Wave musicians shared stages and gallery spaces with visual artists who were often performers as well.

Among the New York artists featured are Rita Ackermann, Robert Longo, Richard Prince, Christian Marclay, Adam Pendleton, Mika Tajima and Jack Pierson. A group of portrait photographs by Richard Prince depicts such legendary art and music figures as Brian Eno, David Byrne, Dee Dee Ramone, Tina Weymouth, Adele Bertei, Kate Pierson, Cindy Wilson and Laurie Anderson. Also on display are photographs from Richard Kern's *New York Girls* series and stills from his film *Submit to Me Now*, as well as Christian Marclay's *Untitled* (1987-2007), made up of vinyl LP albums spread over a gallery floor.

United Kingdom

In the U.K., art schools were hotbeds of highly creative exchanges between avant-garde art and rock music. Artists in this section include Richard Hamilton, Jeremy Deller, Steven Claydon, Scott King and Douglas Gordon. Ephemera documenting the activities of the collective Throbbing Gristle are also presented. Jim Lambie—artist, DJ and ex-member of the band The Boy Hairdressers (which became Teenage Fanclub)—skilfully captures the energy and spirit of rock music with his spectacular new sculptural installation.

Continental Europe

In continental Europe, the crossover between the visual arts and rock and roll was fostered by the overlapping of the artistic and musical avant-gardes and an awareness of industrial culture. The scene in Germany in the 1980s and 1990s, with artists such as Martin Kippenberger, Kai Althoff and Thomas Zipp, was especially active in this regard. Among the other European artists featured in the exhibition are Jutta Koether and Pipilotti Rist.

West Coast

On the U.S. West Coast, the connection between art and rock was more geographically dispersed and loosely defined than in New York. The West Coast art scene encompassed San Francisco's psychedelic culture of the 1960s and anti-establishment figures based in Los Angeles. Included in this section are Raymond Pettibon's drawings for flyers and album covers, Jason Rhoades' neon sign installation *Velvet Underground/Perfect World*, and works by Mark Flores, Thaddeus Strode, Dave Muller and Mungo Thomson.

In Canada, Vancouver artist Rodney Graham explored installation, photography and film, as well as music with the Rodney Graham Band. Graham's *Awakening*, previously seen at the Musée in the solo exhibition devoted to this artist in 2006, is presented here.

U.S. Midwest

Among the Midwest artists are Ed Paschke, Karl Wirsum (Chicago Imagists) and Pedro Bell, along with newer Chicago artists like Melanie Schiff and Tony Tasset, whose works arise out of vintage rock and roll culture.

World

From the drawings of Japanese neo-Pop artist Yoshimoto Nara and Daniel Guzmán's noir rock-themed drawings to Thai artist Rirkrit Tiravanija's recording studio and the large-scale graphic collages of the Brazilian collective assume vivid astro focus, many other countries also explore and celebrate the fusion of art and rock music.

Punctuating this journey through the exhibition are stunning video installations such as *Andy Warhol's Exploding Plastic Inevitable* by Ronald Nameth; *Fiorucci Made Me Hardcore* by Mark Leckey; Douglas Gordon's *Bootleg* series; Tony Oursler's *Sound Digressions in Seven Colors*; Aïda Ruilova's *Untitled*; and Slater Bradley's *The Year of the Doppelganger*. Yet other videos will be shown on monitors: *Rock My Religion* by Dan Graham and *Synesthesia* by Tony Oursler. Finally, a video program will be presented, including works by Art & Language and The Red Krayola, Judith Barry, Richard Kern and Sonic Youth, Stephen Parrino, and The Residents.

Credits

Sympathy for the Devil: Art and Rock and Roll Since 1967 was organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and curated by MCA Chicago curator Dominic Molon. The Montréal presentation was coordinated by Paulette Gagnon, Chief Curator at the Musée d'art contemporain, with the support of François LeTourneux, associate curator, and Marjolaine Labelle, curatorial assistant.

Support for the exhibition was generously provided by Cari and Michael Sacks. Additional support was provided by the following collectors and donors: Sara Albrecht, Marilyn and Larry Fields, Brian Herbstritt, Martin and Rebecca Eisenberg, Nancy and David Frej, Adrienne and Stan Green, Dana and Andy Hirt, Sylvie Légère and Todd Ricketts, the Orbit Fund, Curt and Jennifer Conklin, Sam Schwartz, and Debra and Dennis Scholl.

Radio stations CHOM 97.7 FM and énergie 94.3 Montréal have joined with the Musée as media partners for the Montréal presentation of *Sympathy for the Devil*.

Montréal will definitely catch a wave of rock music this fall, with the anthology *Sympathy for the Devil: Art and Rock and Roll Since 1967*, set to run at the Musée d'art contemporain from October 10, 2008 to January 11, 2009; the exhibition *Warhol Live: Music and Dance in Andy Warhol's Work*, at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts from September 25, 2008 to January 18, 2009; and *Replay*, devoted to artist Christian Marclay, to be presented at DHC/ART Foundation for Contemporary Art from November 30, 2008 to March 29, 2009. Tourisme Montréal is proud to partner this joint tourist promotion, under the banner *Art Rocks in Montréal*.

The Musée d'art contemporain is a provincially owned corporation funded by the Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine du Québec. It receives additional funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Canada Council for the Arts.

The **Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal** is located at **185 Sainte-Catherine Street West**, Montréal, Québec H2X 3X5, **Place-des-Arts metro**. Information: **514.847.6226** or www.macm.org. The museum is open Tuesday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and until 9 p.m. on Wednesdays as well as for its *Nocturnes* on the first Friday evening of every month. Admission: adults \$8, students \$4.