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SFMOMA PRESENTS FOCUSED SURVEY OF
RECENT INNOVATIONS IN *BODY DESIGN*

Conventional notions of good design, especially theories about ergonomics, favor objects and spaces that accommodate and even mimic the human form. *Body Design*, on view at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) from November 16, 2002 through March 23, 2003, looks at several provocative designers and artists who take this conventional thinking one step further by reconsidering the relationships of the body to space and physiology to function. Organized by Joseph Rosa, the Museum's Helen Hilton Raiser Curator of Architecture and Design, with the assistance of Curatorial Associate Ruth Keffer, *Body Design* features more than a dozen prototypes and commercially available works from the fields of fashion, furniture, industrial design and architecture.

The works explore three themes: proximity—the way in which the human body constructs and orders the space immediately around it; cladding—design that augments or deforms the body; and enclosure—how the body is constrained or transformed by constructed space, especially ergonomically designed space. Among the designers and artists whose works are represented are Aziz & Cucher, Christopher C. Deam, Fashion Force, Philippe Grégoire and Claire Petetin, IDEO, Eiko Ishioka, No Picnic and Marcel Wanders.

The theme of proximity is explored by IDEO's *Kiss Communicator*, 1999, in which a person transmits a signal through a hand-held, dimpled, rose-colored object that results in a "kiss" being emitted from a companion receiving device. Notes curator Rosa: "Although this work can be seen as a symbol of what it represents, it also possesses the trait of 'disconnect' that is reflective of our contemporary culture. With this object, a very intimate gesture is transmitted through space." The shape of Marcel Wanders's

Airborne Snotty Vase: Pollinosis, 2001, is based on one "bloblet" of fluid from the shower of microscopic particles expelled when a person sneezes; a digital image of the particle is sent to a prototyping machine in which a computer



Marcel Wanders, *Airborne Snotty Vase: Pollinosis*, 2001; Collection SFMOMA

directs a laser to melt and mold plastic powder into the shape that the sneeze particle occupies in space. (Each of the five vases in this series is named for a different infectious condition.)

The idea of cladding is evident in Fashion Force's *Wearable Chair*, 2002. In this work, a vest transforms into a compact seat that uses tension to stay upright. *Ram Chair*, 2002, by No Picnic, is fabricated as a large, neutral, freestanding frame that conforms to the user's body. *Heatseat*, 2001, by Jürgen Mayer H., is a chaise longue that uses heat-sensitive paint to record the impression of the user's body, leaving a trace of the user's interaction with the object; visitors to SFMOMA's presentation will be invited to simulate the experience with a specially designed interactive panel. And in Aziz & Cucher's highly conceptual works, *Interior Series #2* and *#3*, 1998–1999, walls are digitally clad with human skin with all of its imperfections, discolorations, blemishes and surface irregularities. In this case, observes Rosa, "Reality is mapped into fictional space."

Two noteworthy works address the themes of both cladding and enclosure. Eiko Ishioka designed *Concentration Coat*, 2002, to create a literal and conceptual space for Olympic athletes to meditate, listen to music or relax prior to competition; the oversized garment forms a kind of womblike cocoon that keeps out distractions and external noise (the literal space) in the interval between warm-up and performance (the conceptual space). In renderings for *Primitive Hut*, 2000, Bay Area architect Raveevarn Choksombatchai of Loom conceptualizes a single-unit dwelling whose fluid and organic surface is based on the notion of skin and bones.

Other examples of enclosure include the *Luggage House* renderings, 1996–2000, by Philippe Grégoire and Claire Petetin, which may be the ultimate example of portable enclosure: the work begins as a thin aluminum suitcase that telescopes out to reveal a seemingly endless set of modular units suitable for shelter. Christopher C. Deam's 16-foot *Bambi Trailer*, 2001, designed for Airstream, is the most concrete manifestation of all of the exhibition's concepts. Outfitted primarily in silver and white, the trailer's streamlined, perfectly ergonomic design is an outstanding example of spatial and ornamental minimalism. Visitors are invited to walk through the trailer and interact with the design.

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Hours: Open daily (except Wednesdays) 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; open late Thursdays until 9 p.m.; summer hours (Memorial Day to Labor Day) open at 10 a.m.; closed Wednesdays and the following public holidays: Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day.

Admission prices: Adults \$10; seniors \$7, sponsored by Pacific Bell; students \$6. SFMOMA members and children 12 and under are admitted free, sponsored by The Charles Schwab Corporation Foundation. Thursday evenings, 6 to 9 p.m., half price admission is sponsored by Banana Republic. The first Tuesday of each month admission is free.

SFMOMA is easily accessible by MUNI, BART, Golden Gate Transit, SamTrans and Caltrain. Hourly, daily and monthly parking is available at the SFMOMA Garage at 147 Minna Street. For parking information, call 415/348-0971.

Visit our Web site at www.sfmoma.org or call 415/357-4000 for more information.

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