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DISPARITIES & DEFORMATIONS
OUR GROTESQUE

SITE Santa Fe's Fifth
 International Biennial
 Curated by Robert Storr
 July 18, 2004
 through January 9, 2005

SITE SANTA FE TO PRESENT FIFTH INTERNATIONAL BIENNIAL

Pre-eminent Scholar Robert Storr to Curate Exhibition
Disparities and Deformations: Our Grotesque
July 18, 2004 - January 9, 2005

Santa Fe, New Mexico—From fantastic to farcical, unsightly to whimsical, the grotesque has many faces, all of which are the result of paradoxical combinations of imagery, form and feeling. SITE Santa Fe selected renowned critic/curator Robert Storr to organize its Fifth International Biennial Exhibition, which will focus on the theme of the grotesque in some of today's most cutting-edge art. On view from July 18, 2004 through January 9, 2005, *Disparities and Deformations: Our Grotesque* will feature a diverse group of approximately 60 international artists of different generations who work with a wide range of materials, processes, and ideas. The exhibition will showcase about 100 works in such media as painting, sculpture, photography, video, and comics, some of them on public view for the first time.

Among the artists participating in the Biennial are:

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| Louise Bourgeois | Kim Jones | Lamar Peterson | Jenny Saville |
| Charles Burns | Maria Lassnig | Alexander Ross | John Waters |
| Carroll Dunham | Paul McCarthy | Susan Rothenberg | Franz West |
| Ellen Gallagher | Herman Nitsch | Peter Saul | Lisa Yuskavage |

“The Biennial is one of the most highly anticipated events in SITE’s far-ranging program of exhibitions, lectures, film screenings, and performances,” says Charles Stainback, Executive Director of SITE Santa Fe. “Thanks to Robert Storr, this year’s Biennial will bring together some of the most innovative art of our time, exploring its compelling formal, emotional and intellectual complexities. The exhibition reflects our ongoing commitment to providing the Santa Fe community and its visitors with opportunities to engage with the most important contemporary artists and their work.”

The grotesque tradition in art extends back to ancient times and can be traced through the Renaissance, Baroque, and Romantic periods. In the modern era, it can be found in the Expressionist and Surrealist movements, among others. *Disparities and Deformations: Our Grotesque* will examine expressions of the grotesque tradition in contemporary art.

“The grotesque has informed many of the key post-modern phenomena in art and culture, and it continues to be a defining element in some of today’s most powerful and provocative art,” says Robert Storr, the Biennial’s curator. “Thriving on contradictory impulses, the grotesque is a combination of opposites, such as beauty and ugliness, delight and delirium, tragedy and comedy. Encompassing both the wondrous and the disturbing, the works featured in this exhibition illustrate and investigate this fascinating and subversive trend embraced by contemporary art.”

About the Exhibition

“Grotesque,” which is derived from the Italian word “grotto,” first referred to the strange motifs discovered when the ruins of Nero’s palaces were unearthed in the 15th century and their heavily ornamented interiors came to light. Unlike their classical counterparts, these late Roman ornaments were characterized by strangely incongruous elements—bizarre combinations of plant, animal, human, or monstrous forms. Such antique whimsies became an inspiration to Renaissance masters like Raphael and Dürer. Subsequently, the grotesque intermittently preoccupied and gave license to artists during the Baroque, Rococo, Romantic, modern, and postmodern periods. Over the centuries, the grotesque spirit has evolved into intertwining traditions of widely various permutations, from the figurative to the abstract, fanciful to nightmarish, comic to harrowing, and exquisite to unapologetically vulgar. The grotesque reveals some of the world’s ambiguities and people’s ambivalences in ways that are impossible to ignore or deny, dissolving familiar realities into disconcerting paradoxes.

Disparities and Deformations: Our Grotesque will bring together a diverse group of contemporary artworks that in one way or another respond and give new substance to the sense of emotional and logical uncertainty inherent in the grotesque, described by the 19th century writer Jean Paul as a state of “soul dizziness.” The exhibition tracks the incongruous combination of disparate forms and ideas in the work of internationally renowned artists of different generations, coming from various cultural contexts, and working with different processes and ideas. The exhibition reveals the many elements of paradox, usually critical, inherent in the artists’ work while showing that the grotesque has many sources of inspiration and a nearly infinite number of guises.

Of the approximately 60 artists in the exhibition, most will be represented by one large-scale work, some by several works in a smaller format. Two installations and two media projects will be created especially for the Biennial, which will be presented in SITE Santa Fe's dramatic warehouse space. All works included in the Biennial—some newly created and never exhibited before—express a sensibility that is alive in the world at the moment, at a time rife with cultural contradictions of all types.

Among the exhibition's highlights are original pages from Charles Burns' multi-volume comic book series *Black Hole*; a major installation by Kim Jones, who works with a wide range of materials and processes such as photography, drawing, sculpture, and performance; the work of Lamar Peterson, a young artist participating in an international exhibition for the first time; select images by Maria Lassnig, an Austrian painter in her eighties whose images are both comical and alarming; work by Peter Saul, an all-around oppositional artist and one of the fathers of "bad boy" painting; new sculpture by Paul McCarthy, who specializes in formal anarchy and rude comedy; paintings by Lisa Yuskavage executed in old master technique put to the service of, and clashing with, distorted images; and the films of John Waters, finely crafted caricatures, at once stylish and vulgar, of everything that good taste and right-mindedness are supposed to stand for.

Biennial Curator Robert Storr

A pre-eminent critic, curator and scholar, Robert Storr was recently appointed the Rosalee Solow Professor of Modern Art at The Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. Prior to this appointment, Storr was Senior Curator in the Department of Painting and Sculpture, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, a position he held for 12 years. During his tenure there, Storr was instrumental in acquiring many important works that greatly enhanced the museum's collection. Exhibitions organized by Storr for MoMA include *Max Beckmann* (2003), *Gerhard Richter: Forty Years of Painting* (2002), *Tony Smith: Architect, Painter, Sculptor* (1998), *Chuck Close* (1998), *On the Edge: Contemporary Art from the Werner and Elaine Dannheisser Collection* (1997-98), *Robert Ryman* (1993), and *Dislocations* (1991).



SITE Santa Fe

Opening Weekend Celebrations

The public opening of the Biennial will be surrounded by an exciting array of special events, scheduled to take place Friday, July 16 through Sunday, July 18, 2004.

Weekend celebrations will include a gala benefit dinner, a private preview for members, and a keynote address by Robert Storr on Sunday, July 18 at 2 p.m., among other activities. For more information on special events and tickets, please call SITE Santa Fe at 505-989-1199.

Education and Public Programs

Visitors to the Biennial will be able to draw upon substantial gallery guides and other information material to learn more about the participating artists and the key themes and influences inherent in their work. SITE Guides will offer free, in-depth exhibition tours at any time during public visits, and also on Fridays at 6 pm, Saturdays & Sundays at 2 pm.

SITE Santa Fe will present a series of gallery talks and discussion forums with the artists in conjunction with the exhibition. In addition, the Museum is providing extensive community education and outreach programs, developed in collaboration with numerous partner organizations.

Exhibition Catalogue

Accompanying the exhibition will be a full-color, hard-bound, 200-page catalogue to be published by SITE Santa Fe and distributed worldwide by Distributed Art Publishers (D.A.P.) The catalogue will feature essays by Robert Storr and an introduction by Charles Stainback and will retail for \$49.95.

Exhibition Support

Disparities and Deformations: Our Grottesque is made possible in part with generous support from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and Sotheby's.

Additional funding and in-kind support for the exhibition has been generously provided by Hotel Santa Fe, Fayez Sarofim & Co., Richard and Dottie Barrett, Fran Bass, Deborah Berkman, Gay Block, Bobbie Foshay-Miller, Katherine Gentry, Michael Klein, Rosina Lee Yue and Bert Lies, Marlene Meyerson, William A. Miller, Rita and Kent Norton, Bridget and Bob Nurock, Antje and Marc Olivie, Mary Porter, David Ray, Alice Simkins, Jill and Don Tishman, and Kathy and Charles Webster.

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This announcement is partially funded by the City of Santa Fe Arts Commission and the 1% Lodgers' Tax.

About SITE Santa Fe

SITE Santa Fe opened in 1995 as a non-collecting institution dedicated to presenting diverse, cutting-edge contemporary art to local, regional, and global audiences. The only contemporary art space of its kind in New Mexico, SITE Santa Fe has presented over 50 exhibitions and the work of more than 300 international artists to date. SITE Santa Fe's dynamic programming includes six to eight exhibitions per year plus numerous related activities such as lectures, film screenings, performances, catalogue publications, and award-winning education and outreach programs. SITE Santa Fe is known for mounting high-quality, thought-provoking biennial exhibitions that explore current issues and trends in contemporary art and draw large international audiences. Housed in a former warehouse, SITE Santa Fe has dramatic, flexible spaces that can accommodate many types of installations, including large-scale and site-specific works.

About SITE Santa Fe's Biennial Tradition

SITE Santa Fe's biennial exhibitions, which are guest-curated, invite leading curators and critics to explore compelling issues in contemporary art. Each exhibition has been an expression of the unique vision of its curator, as well as an impressively diverse showcase for the most exciting artists of our time. Shirin Neshat, Anish Kapoor, Bruce Nauman, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Janine Antoni, Kenneth Anger, Louise Bourgeois, Mona Hatoum, Jenny Holzer, and Ed Ruscha are just a few of the artists who have participated in the institution's biennials.

SITE Santa Fe's first biennial exhibition, Bruce Ferguson's 1995 *Longing and Belonging: From the Faraway Nearby*, broke new ground in Santa Fe's contemporary art scene, opening the door for artists of global renown to exhibit alongside respected local artists. Two years later, Francesco Bonami's *TRUCE: Echoes of Art in an Age of Endless Conclusions*, expanded the meditation on place, addressing issues of individuality, isolation, and community. The third biennial, Rosa Martinez's *Looking for a Place*, boldly pushed exhibition boundaries by installing works of art throughout the Santa Fe region that spoke to provocative, site-specific issues. In 2001, Dave Hickey strived to address universal notions of beauty with *Beau Monde: Toward a Redeemed Cosmopolitanism*.

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This Fourth International Biennial was the recipient of the prestigious International Association of Art Critics/USA 2001-2002 Award for Best Show in a Kunsthalle or an Alternative Space.

SITE Santa Fe is located at 1606 Paseo de Peralta, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Biennial peak exhibition hours (July 18-September 5, 2004) are Wednesday through Saturday, 10:00 am–6:00 pm; Friday, 10:00 am–7:00 pm; Sunday, noon–6 pm. After Labor Day weekend, Monday, September 6, 2004, hours will return to Wednesday through Saturday, 10:00 am–5:00 pm; Friday, 10:00 am–7:00 pm; Sunday, noon–5 pm. Admission is \$8.00 for adults and \$4.00 for students and seniors; SITE Santa Fe members are free. Free admission is offered on Fridays, made possible by a grant from The Brown Foundation, Inc., Houston. Free tours by SITE Guides are available during public visits, and are also offered on Fridays at 6 pm, Saturdays & Sundays at 2 pm. SITE Santa Fe gift certificates are available. Call 505.989.1199 for more information. This announcement is partially funded by the City of Santa Fe Arts Commission and the 1% Lodgers' Tax.

For more information, please contact SITE Santa Fe at 505-989-1199 or visit our website at www.sitesantafe.org.

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