

AMATEURS

Lower Gallery April 23, 2008 to August 09, 2008

Amateurs surveys a terrain of artistic practice that departs from the hyperprofessionalization characterizing so much cultural production today. Whether collaborating with actual amateurs or working as amateurs in disciplines beyond the art world, the artists featured in this exhibition refuse to let the experts have the last word. They are committed instead to a democratization of artistic production—one that often invites us, the viewers, to reflect upon our own role as citizens in a participatory, democratic society.

Against the background of an increasingly professionalized art world, *Amateurs* will be the first major exhibition to survey recent artworks in which amateurism is embraced as a critical aesthetic strategy and a mode of production. Favored by conceptual artists and earlier by modernist vanguards, an aesthetic of amateurism has long served as a means for deflating models of academic and market-driven art.

Amateurs will develop an exhibition that challenges the mainstream of contemporary art by bringing together artists who elaborate on this tradition, embracing amateurism as a means for questioning basic assumptions about authorship, expertise, the relationship between artist and audience, and the contingency of cultural values. Ultimately, the exhibition will provoke much-needed reflection on the history of this tendency, and its continuing value in challenging the limitations of professionalized art practices.

Amateurs is curated by Ralph Rugoff, former director of the Wattis Institute and current director of the Hayward Gallery at the South Bank Centre in London. It will be accompanied by a full-color exhibition catalog with essays by Rugoff and the scholar John Roberts.

Amateurs will feature works by 18 international artists:

Johanna Billing, Jennifer Bornstein, Andrea Bowers, Phil Collins, Jeremy Deller, Harrell Fletcher,

Josh Greene, Cameron Jamie, Alan Kane, Long March Project, Yoshua Okon, Michele O'Marah, Hirsch Perlman, Jim Shaw, Simon Starling, Javier Téllez, Jeffrey Vallance, and Eric Wesley.

Amateurs is made possible by an Emily Hall Tremain Exhibition Award. The Exhibition Award program was founded in 1998 to honor Emily Hall Tremain. It rewards innovation and experimentation among curators by supporting thematic exhibitions that challenge audiences and expand the boundaries of contemporary art.

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