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EXHIBITION AT THE NEW MUSEUM RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NATURE OF PAINTING

Manuel Pardo: Late 20th Century Still Lifes, a new series of paintings done over the past year, will be on view at The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York from February 16 through April 7, 1991. This one-person exhibition is an extraordinary series of generic still-life paintings that constitute an examination of the nature of painting in postmodern society.

Through large-scale, heavily-framed still-life images, Manuel Pardo raises questions about how it is possible to make paintings that are both deeply engaged and at the same time challenge the act of painting itself. These quirky, subversive paintings exist first and foremost as objects rather than as traditional works of art; everything in them, including their thick black handcrafted frames, is simplified and overstated. The images in all nine works -- a vase and three roses with prominent thorns -- are almost identical, except for a change in the saturated, artificial background colors. The colors -- acid yellow, lime green, hot pink, neon orange, electric blue -- are reminiscent of the colors used in certain cartoons and greeting cards, children's advertising, and late 'sixties fashion.

Late 20th Century Still Lifes are also works which raise timely and provocative questions about the nature of art at the *fin de siecle*, and about our own expectations concerning images, decoration, taste, and aesthetic experience. The work also addresses one of today's central issues: the relationship of art to everyday life and so-called popular culture. These controversial paintings provoke a surprising range of responses, ultimately providing the viewer with a great deal more that meets the eye.

Manuel Pardo: Late 20th Century Still Lifes was funded in part by the Jerome Foundation, The Greenwall Foundation, and The National Endowment for the Arts.

The New Museum of Contemporary Art is located at 583 Broadway between Houston and Prince Streets. Hours are Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday: noon to 6 PM; Friday and Saturday: noon to 8 PM; Monday and Tuesday: closed. Admission is by suggested contribution: \$3.50 general; \$2.50 artists/students/seniors; members and children under 12 admitted free.

Recorded information concerning exhibitions and programs at The New Museum may be obtained by calling 212/219-1355.