

The New Museum

OF CONTEMPORARY ART

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SCENES FROM AN ART MALL PLAY AT THE NEW MUSEUM

The Art Mall: A Social Space, a one-stop emporium of visual, media, and performing arts, will be on view from May 16 to June 28, 1992 at The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York. Inspired by the physical layout found in today's typical American shopping mall, this exhibition investigates how a mall's activities and culture could translate to a public arts museum. Thirty artists will transform the Museum's galleries into a community model advocating social and intellectual exchange in the art circulation process.

What happens when a mall concept is incorporated in an arts environment, shifting the focus from consumerism to arts practices that function as a means for social education and interaction? Booth installations of "product" displays, services, and performance art to suit a variety of interests will be centered around The Art Mall's Cafe. An "Information Kiosk" video installation will sardonically welcome visitors, while facts on legal restraints of public activities in malls scroll across the image, undermining the mall's current apotheosis as a public "town square."

Artists will explore the mall's role as a prominent force in shaping cultural ideology and identity through consumerism. Installations include a nail salon, a foot washing service, a skateboard ramp, an autobiographical mall directory by a self-described "mall rat," and Dan Tisdale's Transitions Inc., which humorously boasts the latest displays in "crossover" beauty enhancement goods.

Unlike its prototype, The Art Mall will encourage "shoppers" to participate with artists and interact with live performances. Events range from parodies of fashion shows and mock product demonstrations to visits with a Santa Claus.

The New Museum issued an open call to artists around the nation to propose projects using the mall concept. Over 125 proposals were reviewed by a programming team of members within and outside of the Museum. Participants included Linda Bryant, Greg Drasler, Ben Kinmont, Alexander Ku, and Charles Wright. Artists Nancy Dwyer, Alexander Ku, Mark Kloth, and architect Jeffrey Murphy served as design consultants. The Art Mall: A Social Space was coordinated by Brian Hannon.

The New Museum of Contemporary Art is located at 583 Broadway between Houston and Prince Streets. Hours are Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday: 12 - 6:00 PM; Friday and Saturday: 12 - 8:00 PM; Monday and Tuesday, closed. Admission is by suggested contribution: \$3.50 general; \$2.50 artists, students, seniors; members and children under 12, free.

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