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**New Museum Presents "New Commissions," Four Works by
Jeremy Deller, Daria Martin, Mathias Poledna, and *Urban China*,
as part of the Three M Project Partnership**

New York, NY...This winter the New Museum will present "**New Commissions**," four significant projects by Jeremy Deller, Daria Martin, **Mathias Poledna**, and **Urban China**, some of the most interesting voices in contemporary art today. These commissions were undertaken as part of the **Three M Project**, an ongoing partnership of **New Museum**, **The Museum of Contemporary Art** in Chicago, and the **Hammer Museum** in Los Angeles, to jointly commission, exhibit, and acquire contemporary art by artists whose work has not yet received significant recognition in the United States. All three museums share a collaborative vision and entrepreneurial spirit, and the belief that ambitious art projects on a national scale can be produced through efficiently sharing knowledge and resources. The Three M Project is sponsored by **Deutsche Bank**.

The partnership, now in its second cycle, presents works by London-born and -based artist Jeremy Deller, whose practice includes orchestrated events, films, and publications; San Francisco-born, London-based filmmaker Daria Martin; Vienna-born, Los Angeles-based video and installation artist Mathias Poledna; and *Urban China*, a Beijing-, Shanghai-, Guangzhou-based multidisciplinary magazine collective. Representing the great variety of contemporary art being produced worldwide, these projects strive to link contemporary art with the complexities of life experience, from intellectual and moral discourse to erotic pleasure, and from the natural world to urban chaos. "New Commissions" includes:

It Is What It Is: Conversations About Iraq
February 11-March 22, 2009

As part of the Three M Project, the New Museum and Creative Time will present *It Is What It Is: Conversations About Iraq*, a new commission by Turner Prize-winning British artist Jeremy Deller that encourages public discussion of the history, present circumstances, and future of Iraq. The project will unfold in two forms, first through conversations with guest experts and witnesses at the New Museum from February 11 through March 22, and subsequently on a three-week cross-country tour, before it is on view at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.

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Experts and witnesses, representing a wide range of experiences and perspectives on Iraq, will be in residence daily in the New Museum's gallery space during public hours with the purpose of initiating unmediated dialogue with Museum visitors. The project is intended to be politically neutral, unscripted, and as formal or informal as each guest desires. Objects meant to further stimulate discussion about Iraq will share the gallery with the experts. The most significant artifact on display will be the remnant of a car that was destroyed in March 2007 by an explosion on Mutanabi street in Baghdad, which was once the site of numerous book markets and cafés, and considered the nexus of Baghdadi cultural and intellectual life. The car is meant to ground conversation in the facts, figures, and eyewitness descriptions that have been so lacking in most information about the Iraq war. A full schedule of guests at the New Museum, as well as biographical information on each participant will be available at conversationsaboutiraq.org.

In March, Deller will depart New York City to broaden the dialogues begun at the New Museum with diverse audiences across the nation. He will travel aboard an RV with Nato Thompson, Curator at Creative Time; Esam Pasha, artist and formerly a translator for the Chief Advisor in the British Embassy of Baghdad and for American forces around Iraq; and Jonathan Harvey, a Platoon Sergeant for the U.S. military and a specialist in the psychological effects of warfare who was recently demobilized. The destroyed car will be placed on a flatbed trailer and driven to various community sites in ten to fifteen cities between New York and Los Angeles to continue the conversation about Iraq.

It Is What It Is: Conversations About Iraq is curated: for the New Museum by: Laura Hoptman, Kraus Family Senior Curator, and Amy Mackie, Curatorial Assistant; and for Creative Time by: Nato Thompson, Curator. The *Conversations* research team includes: Shane Brennan, Sarah Demeuse, Ozge Ersoy, Jazmin Garcia, and Terri C. Smith.

It Is What It Is: Conversations About Iraq is made possible at the New Museum by a gift from Shane Akeroyd. The conversations are made possible by the Bill and Charlotte Ford Artists Talks Fund. Additional support provided by the Harpo Foundation. Special support for Creative Time for *It Is What It Is: Conversations About Iraq* has come from Jed Walentas and Kate Engelbrecht.

Daria Martin: Minotaur
January 28-March 8, 2009

Minotaur is a new film installation created by Daria Martin. It depicts a duet choreographed by the legendary dance and movement pioneer Anna Halprin based on the 1886 sculpture Minotaur by artist Auguste Rodin. Martin has carefully edited the film to juxtapose the movements of the two dancers with close-up views of Rodin's sculpture, images of the sculpture

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in a book, views of the wooded exterior of Halprin's Northern California studio where the dance takes place, and shots of Halprin herself. In doing so, Martin creates a complex and multilayered synthesis of various art forms--film, dance, and sculpture--while simultaneously meditating on the process through which art is made, and the shifting sexual dynamics between men and women as embodied in both the sculpture and Halprin's performative re-imagining of it. This project was curated by Dominic Molon, Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and organized at the New Museum by Laura Hoptman, Kraus Family Senior Curator.

Mathias Poledna: Crystal Palace
January 28-March 8, 2009

Mathias Poledna's new work, *Crystal Palace*, is a 35mm film installation comprised of a small number of long, static shots of the montane rainforest landscape of the Southern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea. Using tightly framed medium-close to medium-wide shots, the film's carefully selected scenes focus on the complex patterns, textures, and the overall abstract qualities of this environment, seemingly without human presence. Only subtle changes in light and movement in foliage provide visual cues to the passage of time. The film is accompanied by a dense and highly edited soundtrack created from on-location and archival field recordings, oscillating between drone-like noise and distinct insect and bird sounds. Simultaneously engaging with as well as collapsing cinematic conventions of narrative development and closure, Poledna's film explores the ambiguities and constructed nature of historical representation. This project is curated by Russell Ferguson, Adjunct Curator, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, and organized at the New Museum by Jarrett Gregory, Curatorial Assistant. This exhibition is made possible, in part, with the support of the Austrian Cultural Forum New York.

Urban China: Informal Cities
February 11-March 22, 2009

This is the first U.S. commission of *Urban China*, the only magazine devoted to issues of urbanism published in China. The magazine's global, cross-disciplinary network of correspondents and collaborators merge rigorous methods of data collection and analysis of rapidly developing cities in China, with witty graphic representations of their findings. This dichotomy endows the magazine with an ability to take dense reams of seemingly unrelated information and spin it into digestible narrative webs, suggesting unknown connections that shape the way cities and lives are continually made and remade. This commissioned installation will include a built environment of reclaimed construction materials; a massive wall graphic combining photographs, found images, numerical data and maps; a flash-based user-navigable database of photographs; and a selected collection of past issues of *Urban China*. Together, these elements will fill the lobby gallery, exploding the magazine's radical worldview off its pages and into the physical space of the New Museum. This project is curated by Benjamin

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Godsill, Curatorial Associate, New Museum. Additional support for Urban China: Informal Cities is provided by The Robert Mapplethorpe Photography Fund.

SUPPORT FOR THE THREE M PROJECT

The Three M Project is sponsored by Deutsche Bank. Additional support provided by the Toby Devan Lewis Emerging Artists Exhibitions Fund.

ABOUT THE NEW MUSEUM

Founded in 1977, the New Museum is Manhattan's only dedicated contemporary art museum and among the most respected internationally, with a curatorial program known for its global scope and adventurousness. With the inauguration of our new, state-of-the-art building on the Bowery, the New Museum is a leading destination for new art and new ideas.

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