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EXHIBITION EXAMINING THE ROLE OF THE INSTITUTION TO OPEN AT THE NEW MUSEUM

The Big Nothing ou Le Presque Rien opens at The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York on January 15, 1992 and remains on view through April 19, 1992. Organized by guest curator Kerri Scharlin, this exhibition examines art as an object and museums as a site of display. The Big Nothing brings together works by younger artists, as well as more established figures, including Jérôme Basserode, Manfred Sternjacob, Kim Lee Kahn, Wendy Jacob, Sam Samore, Gary Simmons, and Fred Wilson. This exhibition will be on view concurrently at The Cultural Services of The French Embassy, 972 Fifth Avenue, New York City from January 15 through February 28, 1992.

The works in The Big Nothing mirror or camouflage the exhibition space itself, turning the illusion of emptiness into a palpable experience. This exhibition questions the authority usually implicit in an art institution context by deemphasizing the art object and calling attention to the museum as a display space. Works in this exhibition rely on minimal visual devices, such as "The Breathing Wall" by Wendy Jacob, a wall that expands and contracts, and Karin Sander's white rectangular "painting" created by polishing a section of sheetrock wall with sandpaper to produce an area of smoothness and shine. Gary Simmons will place speakers near the ceiling that will emanate a monotonous white noise. At The French Embassy, Fred Wilson will install emptied vitrines with signs stating the objects inside have been returned to their countries of origin, as though to right the wrongs of Colonialism. Other artists in the exhibition include Roddy Bogawa, Devon Dikeou, Claire-Jeanne Jézéquel, Alexandre Lenoir, Simon Leung, Eric Maillet, Matthew McCaslin, Linda Roush, Jeff Spaulding, and Rirkrit Tiravanija.

The Big Nothing ou Le Presque Rien has been funded by The Association Francaise d'Action Artistique, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, The Cultural Services of the French Embassy, the Jerome Foundation, The Greenwall Foundation, and The National Endowment For the Arts.

The Cultural Services of the French Embassy is located at 972 Fifth Avenue. Hours are Monday through Friday, 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM. For more information please call 212/439-1448.

The New Museum of Contemporary Art is located at 583 Broadway between Prince and Houston Streets in Soho. 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, free.

Recorded information may be obtained by calling 212/219-1355.