

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Monique Meloche presents **DISCO** at **ARENA GALLERY** 311 N. Sangamon Chicago

Exhibition dates: May 10 - June 9, 2001

Opening reception: Saturday May 12th 6:30-10:30pm

Featuring DJ Jesse de la Peña & first major US performance by Swedish artist Tobias Bernstrup

Special events: Saturday's feature live local DJs from 3-6:30pm

Arena Gallery hours: Tues-Sat 10:30am-6:30pm Sundays 12-4pm

Realizing the power of the disco ball both aesthetically and culturally and its current resurgence in our popular landscape, Monique Meloche has curated a group exhibition of artists who explore different concepts of installation with the literal assistance of the mirrored disco ball.

DISCO features the work of the following 5 international artists:

Ana Laura Aláez (Spanish b. 1964, lives Madrid)

John Armleder (Swiss b. 1948, lives Geneva)

Carla Arocha (Venezuelan b. 1961, lives Antwerp)

Tobias Bernstrup (Swedish b. 1970, lives Berlin/Stockholm)

Nelson Santos (American b. 1969, lives Brooklyn)

Ana Laura Aláez will adapt her *Dance/Disco* project from the Reina Sofia Museum where she converted their Espacio Uno into a discothèque in the spring of 2000. A working disco complete with dance floor, bar and live DJs, furnished with her futuristic furniture and complimented with her video projections on walls, floors, and ceilings. This unapologetic glamour girl mixes fashion, voyeurism, and fantasy into her constructed spaces for posing and posturing. Aláez will represent Spain this summer at the Venice Biennale where she was included in the Aperto the last time around in 1999.

John Armleder who has been incorporating disco balls in his works since the late 1960s, dislocates and recontextualizes these popular cultural signifiers, suggesting that we consider these objects simultaneously as sculptures and as readymade props that combined to create a strangely silent party room. Six rotating 3-foot diameter mirrored spheres are hung in at eye-level; each lit by a pair of spotlights enveloping the viewer in the disorienting, whirling atmosphere created by the flickering, infinite spots of light around the room. Recent installations include MOMA 2000 and ACE Gallery NY/LA.

Carla Arocha will adapt her 1995 installation *Orchid* with 10 new fashion/body oriented pattern paintings on painted walls, patterned carpet floor piece, mood lighting and central spinning disco ball updating her "Disco mausoleum" first seen at the artist's MFA show at UIC's Gallery 400. Arocha will have reinstall her commissioned wall installation *HIDE* 1997 at the MCA Chicago and create a new work for the café's window overlooking the sculpture garden opening May 5th.

Tobias Bernstrup a video/performance artist will perform for the first time in the US singing his original music inspired by the likes of Gary Numan 1980s Euro/Disco/Pop songs live at the opening alongside a projection of his recent animated S&M dance DVD *Tonight Live* 2000. The video lives on with its own soundtrack in a room with makeshift dance floor and disco balls. Bernstrup will participate in the Biennale de Lyon 2001 (June-Sept) which focuses on games with a new piece; a reconstruction of Berlin's Potsdamer Platz as computer game based on the game Unreal-Tournament. Thanks to International Artists' Studio Program in Sweden (IASPIS).

Nelson Santos will create a video installation exploring disco's inherent affiliation with homoeroticism. Featured will be *Disco Balls (Love to Love You Baby)* -- a small white monitor perched atop a white platform playing a continuous loop of what appears to be an undulating disco ball -- a glittery mass in close-up, moving to Donna Summer's disco anthem. As the tape progresses, it becomes clear that the image is of glitter-bedecked testicles.

DISCO is curated by Monique Meloche. A preview of the exhibition with Armleder, Arocha, and Santos occurred at *designlab.miami* in January 2001. This show will travel to *Galapagos Art Space* in New York September 2001 to be adapted to the space. Additional European venues are pending. DJs courtesy DIRECTION Chicago/NY. DJ equipment by SUPREME Records, PA system by Sound Investment, Inc., openings by Entertainment Marketing, Inc.. Disco Balls provided with the assistance of National Products. Invites courtesy The Art Store.

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