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JENNIFER STEINKAMP: MADAME CURIE

Saturday, Jan 22, 2011 - Saturday, Feb 04, 2012 at MCASD Downtown, Jacobs Building



MCASD has commissioned Jennifer Steinkamp to create a new work for MCASD Downtown's Joan and Irwin Jacobs Building. Entitled *Madame Curie*, this new commission is inspired by Steinkamp's recent research into atomic energy, atomic explosions, and the effects of these forces on nature. Marie Curie was the recipient of two Nobel Prizes for creating the theory of radioactivity, and discovering radium and polonium. She was also an avid gardener and lover of flowers. An enveloping panoramic work, the new piece activates a field of moving flowers and flowering trees in line with the imagery of Steinkamp's 2010 work *Orbit Without Seasons*. Flowers rendered realistically for this new work include marsh marigolds, may flower, chestnut blooms, and hop plants, among many others drawn from a list of over 40 plants mentioned in Marie Curie's biography written by her daughter, Eve Curie. The seven-channel projection engages the architecture of the space using seven synchronized projections onto three walls of the 4,500-square-foot gallery.

Steinkamp is one of the most accomplished time-based, digital video artists working today. Her video installations of projected animations engage space and architecture to foster moments of intense public intimacy in our Age of New Media. Physically overwhelming, her animations utilize cutting-edge projectors and digital masking applications to enhance or contradict the architectural features they inhabit and immerse viewers in new phenomenological territory. Like the Light and Space artists of the late 1960s and 1970s from whom this Los Angeles-based artist draws her inspiration, Steinkamp's art proposes a new type of bodily experience. Her work also exists in time, however, in the context of the moving image through carefully realistic renderings of shifting flowers and trees undergoing momentous seasonal or climatic changes. As powerful phenomenological environments, Steinkamp's installations ask for a novel reading of the role played by architecture, and take viewers beyond the physical boundaries of a built interior to contemplate their surroundings as more than a matter of space, but also as a factor of time, desire, and memory.

Jennifer Steinkamp: Madame Curie is organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego and is made possible thanks to a generous lead gift from Joan and Irwin Jacobs.

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Jennifer Steinkamp: Madame Curie is curated by MCASD Associate Curator Lucía Sanromán.