

For the first time in Québec

The Galerie de l'UQAM presents *Cloaca No. 5* by contemporary artist WIM DELVOYE

Dates: January 16 to February 14, 2009

Vernissage: Thursday January 15 at 5:30 p.m.

Exhibition curator: Wayne Baerwaldt

Montreal, January 7, 2009 – For the first time in Québec, art lovers and curiosity seekers will have an opportunity to appreciate one of the most important and controversial works by world-renowned contemporary artist Wim Delvoye. The artist's presence at the vernissage on January 15 is exceptional, given the impressive number of his current exhibitions around the world.

After Kaohsiung, Taiwan and Luxemburg, it is Montreal's turn to see *Cloaca No. 5*, the fifth incarnation of the *Cloaca* series, which has been exhibited across the globe. This exhibition is organized and touring in collaboration with the Illingworth Kerr Gallery of the Alberta College of Art and Design in Calgary.

A work of art with human needs

What exactly is *Cloaca No. 5* and why does it fascinate even those who are usually indifferent to art? At the intersection of art and science, *Cloaca No. 5* is a machine/sculpture that reproduces the human digestive system, from mastication to excretion. Each step is perfectly recreated: *Cloaca No. 5* contains all the enzymes, bacteria and chemicals of the human digestive system. Once installed by the artist's team of technicians, the machine is fed twice daily at fixed times, in a well-defined ritual.

Inspired by human consumption

Wim Delvoye explores the merchandising of today's consumer culture. Appropriating images from well-known brands, the artist creates experiences that challenge bioethics. The *Cloaca No. 5* logo uses the recognizable graphics of a famous perfume. And the *Wim Delvoye* brand is also sold and consumed in a variety of forms (a Wim action doll, t-shirts, toilet paper, etc.). A number of these products will be on sale at the Galerie during the exhibition.

Not only does *Cloaca No. 5* invite us to consider the definition of life, from start to finish; by drawing a parallel between an object of distaste and an art object, it also raises questions about how these are perceived. On a macroeconomic scale, *Cloaca No. 5* depicts pure materialism and unbridled consumption. It is a metaphor for our post-industrial society, a critique of hyper-capitalism.

About Wim Delvoye

Born in 1965 in Wervik, in the Flemish countryside, Wim Delvoye lives and works in Ghent, Belgium. His works have been shown in numerous individual and collective exhibitions in private and public galleries, museums, and biennials around the world, including the Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris), the Casino Luxembourg, the New

Museum of Contemporary Art (New York), the Venice Biennale, MOCA (Shanghai) and the Kunstwerke (Berlin). He belongs to a generation of Flemish artists that have revolutionized contemporary art. His best-known works include the *Cloaca* series, *Art Farm*, *Gothic Work*, *9 Muses* and *SexRays*.

The artist's website: <http://www.wimdelvoye.be/>

Supports

Canada Council for the Arts

Department of Canadian Heritage through the Canada Travelling Exhibitions Program

Free public activities

Inaugural meal — January 15 at 5:30 p.m.

The exhibition opening will be a festive evening where four artists, Valérie Blass + Anthony Burnham, Sylvie Cotton and Stephen Schofield, will prepare a three-course meal on site for *Cloaca No. 5*.

Roundtable discussion — February 3 at 5:30 p.m.

What's your opinion of *Cloaca*? An art historian, a gastroenterologist and a sociologist will express their views on Wim Delvoye's work.

Noontime Contemporary Art — Every Wednesday from 1 to 1:45 p.m.

There will be a guide at the Galerie to exchange ideas with the public. Bring your lunch and dine with *Cloaca*!

Screening — February 14 from noon to 6 p.m.

The short film *Next Floor*, by UQAM Communications graduate Dennis Villeneuve, will be screened in a loop on the last day of the exhibition. Courtesy of DHC/Fondation pour l'art contemporain. *Next Floor* depicts a grotesque banquet where 12 characters participate in a bizarre gastronomic procession. It was awarded the Grand prix Canal + for short films at the Cannes Festival in 2008.

Wim Shop

Check out the "Wim Delvoye" products on sale at the Galerie.

Address and hours

Galerie de l'UQAM

Judith-Jasmin Pavilion, Room J-R120

1400 Berri (corner of Sainte-Catherine East), Montréal

Tuesday to Saturday, noon to 6 p.m. – Free admission

Information

Phone: 514 987-8421

www.galerie.uqam.ca

Media

Visits during machine assembly **by appointment only.**

The team of technicians and the artist will be mounting the machine/sculpture from January 12 to 15. It will be possible to attend and interview the people in charge of maintaining the work. For an appointment: contact Huguette Lucas at 514 987-3000, ext. 6832 or by email at lucas.huguette@uqam.ca.

Interviews

Wim Delvoye (interviews in French or English from January 15 – 17)

Wayne Baerwaldt, exhibition curator (interviews in English from January 13 – 16)

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