



**CENTER**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Dervish Cairo, 2008/ Dervish, 2004, Jennifer Steinkamp

**JENNIFER STEINKAMP INSTALLATION "DERVISH" ANCHORS U.S.  
PRESENTATION AT CAIRO BIENNALE**

**Programming includes experimental animation screening,  
website & blog, and artist/curator roundtable**

(West Hollywood, Dec. 2, 2008) The United States will be represented at the 11<sup>th</sup> International Cairo Biennale by new-media artist Jennifer Steinkamp, as well as with a diverse program of activities designed to promote international exchange. Organized by Kimberli Meyer, director of the MAK Center for Art & Architecture at the Schindler House in Los Angeles, a team of Los Angeles-based artists and curators will conduct a variety of adjunct programs, including "Animation Buffet," a screening of international experimental animations; public and private roundtable discussions; a catalogue, a website and blog. Organized around the theme, "The other is no other but myself," the Cairo Biennale will run from December 20, 2008 – February 20, 2009.



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Jennifer Steinkamp is known for creating computer-generated immersive installations that are both thought-provoking and dazzling to the eye. Her digital animations use state-of-the-art technologies and employ elements of popular culture while raising fundamental questions about politics, perception and existence. At the Cairo Arts Palace, Steinkamp will exhibit *Dervish* (2004–2005), originally created after a visit to Istanbul and inspired by the famed Sufi dancers, whose movements embody the soul's communication with the divine. *Dervish* surrounds the viewer with large, digitally drawn trees that swing and sway to unheard rhythms, generating a disorienting yet enchanting physical experience.

The installation will be accompanied by a new work, *Dervish Cairo* (2008), a suite of three prints that superimposes the trees of *Dervish* onto photographs of Cairo's urban landscape. These images highlight the passage of time by envisioning the interaction of the ancient with the contemporary. Both *Dervish* and *Dervish Cairo* pay homage to the dervish spinning ritual as an inspirational, mindful and peaceful practice. Both imply that alternatives to Western perception and hegemony are necessary and desirable.

The Los Angeles art community will also be represented in Cairo by a diverse team of curators and practitioners. These include writer, curator and artist Malik Gaines; artist and curator Sherin Guirguis; independent curator Chip Tom; and animation scholar and CalArts faculty member, Maureen Furniss. The L.A. team is conducting a variety of cultural programs as part of the U.S. contribution to the Cairo Biennale. Going live December 12, 2008 is the project website and blog, which will document all team activities and can be found at: <http://cairo2008.makcenter.org>. Public dialogue will be activated on December 22 with "Other Sides of the World," a presentation and roundtable discussion in which Gaines, Guirguis, Meyer and Tom give short presentations on their multi-disciplinary work in Los Angeles and discuss common threads in their practices. The "Animation Buffet" screening, curated by Maureen Furniss, will be offered on December 23. The approximately 80-minute program features short videos by a wide variety of international artists. The "Extra-Biennial Blog" will chronicle the activities and art of the Biennale, as well as other art events in Cairo such as the multi-venue "Photo Cairo" and the workshop and December 24<sup>th</sup> performance by LA group My Barbarian at The Townhouse Gallery.

A full-color exhibition catalogue has been produced, which will be available at the MAK Center bookstore, starting in mid-December 2008. To order the book, please visit: [http://www.makcenter.org/MAK\\_Bookstore.php](http://www.makcenter.org/MAK_Bookstore.php)

For more information on the U. S. presentation at the Cairo Biennale, please visit <http://cairo2008.makcenter.org> after December 12, 2008.

The official United States entry in the Eleventh International Cairo Biennale is presented by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State, Washington, D.C., in cooperation with the American Embassy, Cairo. The program has been organized by the MAK Center for Art and Architecture at the Schindler House, Los Angeles.

Special thanks to the officers and staff of the Public Affairs Office of the American Embassy in Cairo, the Commissaire General Ehab El-Laban, and the Palace of Art director Mohamed Talaat.

@ THE SCHINDLER HOUSE

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FOR ART + ARCHITECTURE, L.A.

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The MAK Center for Art & Architecture is located at the Schindler House, 835 N. Kings Road in West Hollywood. Public hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Regular admission is \$7/\$17 with the guide book, *Schindler By MAK*; students and seniors, \$6/\$16 with book; free for Friends of the Schindler House and on Fridays, 4 to 6 p.m. Parking is available at the public structure at the northeast corner of Kings Road and Santa Monica Boulevard. For further information, the public may contact [www.MAKcenter.org](http://www.MAKcenter.org) or call (323) 651-1510.

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**IMAGES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**