

**PRESS RELEASE**

***WILLIAM KENTRIDGE: FIVE THEMES* (30 September – 4 December 2011)**

A major survey of the contemporary South African artist William Kentridge will open at Garage Center for Contemporary Culture in September 2011. Curated by Mark Rosenthal, *William Kentridge: Five Themes* will feature more than 40 influential works from the last three decades, including drawing, film, collage, printmaking, sculpture, books and stage design.

Born in 1955 in Johannesburg, South Africa - where he continues to live and work - Kentridge first earned international acclaim in the 1990s with a series of 'drawings for projection': short animated films portraying daily life under apartheid. In his post-apartheid career, which is the focus of this survey, Kentridge has enlarged the thematic range of his work to examine other political conflicts. His oeuvre charts a universal history of war and revolution and includes Namibia and Ethiopia, as well as the cultural history of post-revolutionary Russia. His work evokes very complex memories and images left in deep psychological traces after devastating policies and regimes. In contrast to traditional political art, Kentridge's work portrays the effects of political events upon those who observe and remember them, whether they be perpetrators, victims or onlookers.

The exhibition also includes works created in preparation for *The Nose*, Dmitri Shostakovich's opera of 1930, directed by Kentridge last year for the Metropolitan Opera in New York. The opera is based on Nikolai Gogol's absurdist short story of 1836 – in which the nose of a Russian bureaucrat disappears from his face, only to turn up, in uniform, as a higher-ranking official moving in more respected circles. Kentridge uses the story to examine Russian modernism and the suppression of the Russian avant-garde in the 1920s and 1930s.

In a special event on 1 October, Kentridge will present a theatrical monologue titled *I am not me, the horse is not mine*. This live performance focuses on the development process of Kentridge's opera production, *The Nose*.

*William Kentridge: Five Themes* is organized by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the Norton Museum of Art. Generous support for the exhibition is provided by the Koret Foundation. Additional support is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Accompanying the exhibition is a richly illustrated catalogue, complete with a multimedia opera DVD produced by the artist.

## Artist's Biography

William Kentridge studied at the Johannesburg Art Foundation and the Ecole Jacques Lecoq in Paris. He was a founding member of the Free Filmmakers Co-operative in 1988. In 1998, a major retrospective exhibition opened at the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels. A second exhibition, co-organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago and the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, took place in 2001. Kentridge has participated in a number of international biennials and in Documenta X (1997) and XI (2002). He has also been the recipient of numerous prizes, including the Kaiserring Prize (2003), the Carnegie Prize, the Carnegie International (2000), Standard Bank Young Artist Award (1987) and the Red Ribbon Award for Short Fiction (1982).

William Kentridge's work has been seen in museums and galleries around the world since the 1990s, including *Documenta*, Kassel, Germany (1997 and 2003), the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1998 and 2010), the Albertina Museum, Vienna (2010) and Jeu de Paume, Paris (2010). Kentridge's production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* was presented at Theatre de la Monnaie, Brussels, Festival d'Aix and La Scala, Milan (2011). He directed Shostakovich's *The Nose* for the Met Opera, New York in 2010 (the production goes to Festival d'Aix and to Lyon in 2011) to coincide with a major exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Also in 2010, the Musee du Louvre, Paris presented *Carnets d'Egypte*, a project conceived especially for the Egyptian room at the Louvre. In the same year, Kentridge received the prestigious Kyoto Prize in recognition of his contributions in the field of arts and philosophy. In 2011, Kentridge was elected as an Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

## Curator's Biography

Mark Rosenthal is the curator of *William Kentridge: Five Themes*. He has been guest curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York since 2010 and adjunct curator at the Detroit Institute of Art since 2007. From 2003 to 2009, he was a curator at the Norton Museum of Art, where he directed the 2009 *William Kentridge: Five Themes* exhibition, for which he received the award for Best Exhibition of the Year from the American Art Critics Association. Previously, Rosenthal was consultative curator at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and he was Head of Department of Twentieth Century Art at the National Gallery, Washington from 1993 to 1996.

Recent exhibitions curated by Rosenthal include: *Calder Jewelry* (2008) and *Damien Hirst: the Bilotti Paintings* (2005) both at the Norton Museum of Art. As adjunct curator for the Menil Collection, Houston, he has also curated *Surreal Calder* (2005) and an exhibition on Joseph Beuys in 2004. He is currently working on the exhibition *Regarding Warhol*, to be shown at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2012. Rosenthal has contributed to numerous contemporary art publications and has held a number of Art History professorships.

## Further information

**Garage Center for Contemporary Culture** is a major non-profit international arts space based in Moscow, dedicated to exploring and developing contemporary culture, which opened in 2008. There are two distinct areas of programming—to bring important international modern and contemporary art and culture to Moscow and to raise the profile of Russian contemporary culture and encourage a new generation of Russian artists. These are explored through a series of exhibitions ranging from major surveys of important collections to single-artist retrospectives or group exhibitions. Garage also hosts a strong program of special on-site events, including talks, film screenings, workshops, performances and creative activities for children. Garage's space includes galleries, open exhibition spaces, courtyard, cafe, kids space, purpose-built auditorium and media room, all designed by award winning architect Jamie Fobert.

Garage will be relocating from its current space – the former 20th century Bakhmetevsky Bus Garage – to a new site in a historic pavilion inside Gorky Park, Moscow. Opening to the public in 2012, the pavilion will be developed to include international standard galleries, open exhibition areas, children's creative spaces, education and learning facilities, a café and a shop.

Garage is a project of The Iris Foundation, founded by Daria Zhukova.

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**30 September – 4 December 2011**

### **Garage Center for Contemporary Culture**

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Center opening hours:  
Mon – Thurs 11.00 - 21.00  
Fri – Sun: 11.00 - 22.00

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