

— For Immediate Release

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Public Art Fund presents...

Richard Deacon Masters of the Universe: Screen Version

At Doris C. Freedman Plaza in Central Park
September 8, 2005 – April 15, 2006

New York, NY – This September, British artist Richard Deacon will exhibit a new, large-scale stainless-steel sculpture at the southeast corner of Central Park. Deacon is widely regarded as one of the foremost sculptors of our time, best known for creating abstract works that combine biomorphic, open forms and virtuoso engineering. Since the outset of his career in the mid-1970s, Deacon has been interested in materials and their manipulation, often working in natural media such as bent or laminated wood, leather, cloth and ceramics, but also using manufactured metals such as the industrial stainless steel of *Masters of the Universe: Screen Version*.

Decidedly asymmetrical, *Masters of the Universe: Screen Version* is a series of sausage-shaped forms, which tilt and interconnect to form a molecule-like cluster. The individual elements range in size from one-and-a-half feet to almost seven feet. At its tallest point, the sculpture reaches almost ten feet. From at least one side it appears to sit flat on the ground. Seen from other positions, it looks as though the sculpture is lifting off the ground, angling upward with weightlessness that is uncharacteristic for a large stainless-steel sculpture. For Deacon, this dynamic relationship between the sculpture and its physical surroundings is significant; he views both the solid form of the sculpture and the space contained within it as equally important.

Deacon has often written and spoken about the relationship between language and sculpture, noting that "the title falls in between the sculpture and the spectator." *Masters of the Universe: Screen Version* is a reference to constellations in the nighttime sky. In particular, the artist is interested in the way we name clusters of stars based on the two-dimensional shapes they resemble. He observes that there are an infinite number of different relationships among these stars—we just can't see them from earth. "The title refers to the way that humans conceptualize an image in order to represent it, and that representation is mastery. It's an illusion." Just as the Big Dipper, for example, might have a different name if seen from another planet, a sculpture could be described in wholly different terms if seen from another angle. What you see is what you get, but it depends on your point of view.

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ABOUT THE ARTIST

Best known for his abstract sculpture, Richard Deacon's oeuvre also includes his early performance-based work, as well as writings, drawings, and other two-dimensional work. In his sculptures he explores the material world of the everyday and the inner world of the body as a site of sensuality, memory and language. His sculptures fall into three different categories: monumental outdoor sculptures, midsize works created for exhibition in gallery and museum spaces, and a series of smaller-scale works, "Art for Other People," which he began in 1982.

Born in Bangor, Wales in 1949, Richard Deacon lives and works in London. He was a post-graduate art history student at Chelsea School of Art, London (1977-78), received an MA from the Royal College of Art, London (1974-77), and a BA from St. Martin's School of Art, London (1969-72), doing his foundation studies at Somerset College of Art, Taunton (1968-69). He was awarded the Tate Gallery's Turner Prize in 1987. "The Size of It," a major traveling exhibition of large-scale work from the last ten years, opened at the Museo Artium in Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain, in June 2005; it travels to the Sara Hilden Art Museum in Tampere, Finland and to the Arp Museum Bahnhof Rolandseck in Remagen, Germany. Deacon has had solo exhibitions at the Serpentine, Whitechapel and Tate Galleries in London, and was the subject of a major retrospective exhibition at the Tate Gallery Liverpool in 1990.

Special thanks to Marian Goodman Gallery, New York.

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LOCATION AND DIRECTIONS

Masters of the Universe: Screen Version is on view at 60th Street and Fifth Avenue, at the southeast corner of Central Park. Subways: N, R to Fifth Avenue; 4, 5, 6 to 59th Street/Lexington Avenue.

ABOUT DORIS C. FREEDMAN PLAZA

Named for the founder of the Public Art Fund, Doris C. Freedman Plaza has been the site of more than 40 artist projects and commissions, featuring works by internationally known artists such as Jenny Holzer, Paul McCarthy and Juan Muñoz, and emerging artists such as Keith Edmier, Mark Handforth and Chinatsu Ban.

PUBLIC ART FUND is New York's leading organizer of artists' projects, new commissions, installations and exhibitions in public spaces. Public Art Fund is a non-profit arts organization supported by generous contributions from individuals, foundations, and corporations, and with public funds from The New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency, and the City of New York Department of Cultural Affairs.

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