

# Maurizio Cattelan



Kunsthhaus Bregenz

**February 2 to March 24, 2008**

**Opening: Friday, February 1, 2008, 8.00 p.m.**

**Press conference:**

**Thursday, January 31, 2008, 12 noon**

The Pope felled by a meteorite as if by the hand of God ("La Nona Ora," 1999), a miniature model of the artist in a Beuysian felt suit, hanging helplessly from a clothes rack ("La Rivoluzione Siamo Noi," 2000), or the artist breaking into the temple of art through the museum floor (Untitled, 2001) – Maurizio Cattelan, in a mixture of Don Camillo, Pinocchio and court jester, always carries his pictorial statements to extremes so that the realistic depiction of well-practiced social and art world conventions tips over into the absurd and ridiculous. Rather theatrical and ephemeral in his actions, objects, and installations, but deploying ironic sophistication and unexpected turns, the artist spares no taboo in unmasking deceitfulness.

Born in 1960 in the North Italian university town of Padua, he started his career in the eighties creating anti-functional design objects before deciding to work in the art world, which, in his own words, he found "much more appealing." Since then, Cattelan has become an internationally renowned artist, even though he would not describe himself as one. However, without contradictions, provocations, and simultaneously existing differing truths, his work would not be what it is. This strategy, together with a visual power which imprints itself onto our memory, has led to the appearance of his actions and sculptures in the most important international art institutions and to participation in numerous significant group exhibitions and biennials.

Since 1993 when Maurizio Cattelan settled in New York, he has alternately lived and worked both there and in Milan. Not owning a studio, he works in situ, as exhibitions offer him exactly the challenge needed to "find" new works, which are subsequently fabricated by others rather than being made by the artist himself. In this sense, he really is one of Duchamp's great-grandchildren. In contrast to Duchamp, however, he does not relate the idea of the readymade to the selecting of found objects which are then declared as artworks, but views experienced reality in its irreconcilable, often absurd contradictions as a large readymade which he quarries for ideas. "We can find a philosophical idea through television, which we watch every day," says Cattelan. He draws upon his own biography and links this to an Italian

Karl-Tizian-Platz  
Postfach 371  
A-6901 Bregenz

**Telefon**

(+43-55 74) 4 85 94-0

**Fax**

(+43-55 74) 4 85 94-408

**E-Mail**

kub@kunsthhaus-bregenz.at

**Web**

www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at



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attitude to life that continually swings from banality to extreme devoutness and holy veneration. And he finds his subjects in the art world's overheated mannerisms and rituals as much as in the social and political fractures of society.

For Cattelan, style means nothing more than a particular artistic attitude that can be translated into different media, linguistic forms, and visual solutions. An artist like him who has made ironic distance the principle of his practice must rely on flexibility, but never on predictable conclusions. If on occasion this does not suffice he is happy to steal other artists' ideas or even a whole exhibition. Such was the case with a project done for de Appel Gallery in Amsterdam.

Maurizio Cattelan is a storyteller. Storytellers do not carry out revolutions, but they may inspire them. Each image that he generates through his actions and sculptures resembles a shared membrane between his and our emotions. In this, Cattelan really relies on an intensive working process of condensing and refining the ideas, the outcome of which is always an "image" full of narrative inventions. Why for example are the hands of the child in "Charlie Don't Surf" (1997) nailed to the table with pencils? Cattelan loves these little stories, which emerge from within deeper levels of the work. They make the work lively and are triggers for individual stories, which vary from viewer to viewer.

Despite all the variety of ideas and works, there are two founding principles in his oeuvre. Maurizio Cattelan differentiates between works which function as an idea or project, such as the footballers' memorial wall in London on which the results of all the England team's lost games are engraved or the figure with a Picasso mask which greets visitors at the entrance to MoMA in New York, and those works which are transformed into highly memorable images. Within this category fall such works as "Novecento" from 1997, which shows a horse hanging from the ceiling, or "Him" (2001) with Hitler as a boy kneeling repentantly.

In his work, which in equal measure encompasses both humor and humility, it is this tragic but comical keynote that evokes strong, but sometimes also oppressive emotions in us, especially when Cattelan, in all his diversity, repeatedly centers on death as his central motif. In this the artist is very close to his ancestral and national roots. According to Francesco Bonami, death is "the very last moment of pathetic intimacy, the most radical way to avoid public responsibility."

Death is also the major subject of the exhibition at Kunsthhaus Bregenz. For the first time, Maurizio Cattelan has allowed a total architectural installation to be part of his work. By making very few spatial interventions and with three groups of work especially created for Bregenz, he changes the building



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into a burial chamber, which transforms the building's auratic potential into a borderland between disquieting anxiety and ironic distance.

As usual, Cattelan does not want to disclose too much about his exhibition in advance. Yet, he wants his work to be located somewhere between "softness and perversity," he says: "It should be tender, comforting and seductive and yet corrupted, twisted and consumed."

## KUB-Publications

### Cattelan

This publication conceived by Maurizio Cattelan is both a book and an artwork. Like Duchamp's "Boîte-en-valise," it is a survey of Cattelan's work. The artist designed the DIN A3 plates to fit in a fabric envelope; the hand-illustrated text and images carried out on the artist's order emphasize the character of an artist's book. Bice Curiger, chief editor of "Parkett" and curator at Kunsthau Zurich, has contributed a well-informed essay.

#### **Maurizio Cattelan**

German/English

Ed. by Maurizio Cattelan

Graphic design: Christophe Boutin under the supervision of Maurizio Cattelan

With an essay by Bice Curiger

40 pages in fabric envelope, 43 × 32.5 cm

Published by Three Star Books, Paris, in collaboration with Kunsthau Bregenz and Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt

Publication date: February 2008

Price: ca. 95 €

### Peter Zumthor

#### **Kunsthau Bregenz**

The book on the Kunsthau Bregenz that was published in close collaboration with Peter Zumthor in 1997 has been reprinted on the occasion of the exhibition "Peter Zumthor. Buildings and Projects 1986 – 2007."

#### **Peter Zumthor**

#### **Kunsthau Bregenz**

5th, unaltered edition

German/English

Ed. by Kunsthau Bregenz, archiv kunst architektur, Edelbert Köb

With text contributions by Peter Zumthor and Friedrich Achleitner

Photos by Adolf Bereuter, Hélène Binet, Gerald Zugmann

107 pages, 20.2 × 16.4 cm ; Price: 16.80 €



**Kunsthhaus Bregenz**

## **KUB-Calendar 2008**

To commemorate its tenth anniversary, the Kunsthhaus Bregenz has for the first time published a calendar with installation views of twelve characteristic exhibitions that have been shown at the Kunsthhaus Bregenz since 1997.

### **KUB-Calendar 2008**

Format: 55 × 40 cm

12 calendar pages, 2 pages of text

Price: 34 €

**Online-shop: [www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at](http://www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at)**



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## KUB-Editions

### Maurizio Cattelan Bregenz

The edition, which has been designed and commissioned by Maurizio Cattelan, is printed in various techniques on heavy grade handmade paper and is based on of a hand painted original work, which is part of the exhibition.

#### Maurizio Cattelan Bregenz, 2008

A limited edition of 45 copies, numbered and signed, size: 50 x 40 cm

Subscription price during the exhibition: € 2,200

Price after the exhibition: € 2,700; price incl. 10% VAT, plus postage and packaging

published by Kunsthaus Bregenz

### Re-Object/Mythos Portfolio

The portfolio was put together for the exhibitions “Re-Object” and “Mythos.” It consists of 8 works using different techniques, each in the format of 81 × 61 cm, encased in a protective aluminum box. Further information including photos and technical details on all the works are available on request.

#### Portfolio

##### Re-Object/Mythos | 2007

Marcel Duchamp, Gerhard Merz, Damien Hirst, Jeff Koons;

Joseph Beuys, Matthew Barney, Douglas Gordon, Cy Twombly

Limited edition of 45 pieces, numbered and signed, size: 81 × 61 cm

Price on request (incl. 10% VAT), plus forwarding expenses

Published by Kunsthaus Bregenz



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**Douglas Gordon**  
**The path of least resistance**

This is a special edition conceived for the tenth anniversary of the Kunsthaus Bregenz. The title makes reference to a work that Douglas Gordon created for the exhibition “Mythos.”

**Douglas Gordon**  
**The path of least resistance, 2007**

Bracelet, silver (925/000), brushed finish with engraving;  
outside: text “the path of least resistance”;  
inside: “Douglas Gordon | 2007 | Kunsthaus Bregenz”  
Ladies’ model: 147 × 10 mm; Men’s model: 165 × 10 mm  
Limited edition of 82 pieces, numbered and signed  
Price: 950 € incl. 10% VAT, plus forwarding expenses  
Published by Kunsthaus Bregenz



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# **KUB-Billboards**

## **Daniel Schwartz**

### **Turning Away**

**January 21 to March 24, 2008**

**Opening: Thursday, February 7, 2008, 6.00 p.m.**

**Kunsthhaus Bregenz, lecture hall, first basement**

Over the past ten years, Daniel Schwartz, born in Switzerland in 1955, has explored Central Asia and the surrounding regions including Afghanistan, Iran, Mongolia, and Kashmir with his camera. In his photojournalism, essays, and books Schwartz concentrates on “extended time” (Fernand Braudel). His art is informative; his photojournalistic work does not merely react to events but actively seeks out and follows political developments and their social impacts over extended periods of time and over vast geographic areas. “For years my art has told stories about places of the past and the everyday as well as about the journey there. Since every traveler finds his final resting place beside the road, my images of people turning away are also encounters with death – the last of all turning aways.”



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Venue/Organizer:  
**Kunsthaus Bregenz**  
**Karl Tizian Platz**  
**A-6900 Bregenz**

Exhibition concept:  
**Eckhard Schneider,**  
**Maurizio Cattelan**

Director:  
**Eckhard Schneider**

Curator:  
**Rudolf Sagmeister**

Press and public relations:  
**Birgit Albers**  
Phone: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-413  
Fax: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-408  
b.albers@kunsthhaus-bregenz.at

**Press photos to download:**  
**[www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at](http://www.kunsthhaus-bregenz.at)**

Art Education:  
**Winfried Nußbaumüller**  
Phone: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-417  
Fax: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-408  
w.nussbaumueller@kunsthhaus-bregenz.at

Publications:  
**Katrin Wiethege**  
Phone: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-416  
Fax: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-408  
k.wiethege@kunsthhaus-bregenz.at

Editions:  
**Caroline Schneider**  
Phone: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-444  
Fax: (+43-55 74) 4 85 94-408  
c.schneider@kunsthhaus-bregenz.at

Opening hours:  
**Tuesday – Sunday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.**  
**Thursday 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.**