



museum of arts and design

MAD PRESENTS STUDIO JOB MAD HOUSE

The First Solo Museum Exhibition of Studio Job's Work in the US

March 22–August 21, 2016

Press Preview

Monday, March 21, at 4:30 pm

Artists in Conversation

Tuesday, March 22, at 7:00 pm



Photo: Sketch wall in Studio Job atelier, 2015, from *Studio Job: Monkey Business* (Rizzoli: New York, 2016). Photo credit: Loek Blonk

NEW YORK, NY, March 1, 2016 – From March 22 to August 21, the Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) presents *Studio Job MAD HOUSE*. This will be the first solo museum exhibition in the US to explore the creative vision of design collaborators Job Smeets (Belgian, b. 1970) and Nynke Tynagel (Dutch, b. 1977), who established their atelier Studio Job in Belgium in 1998.

For the exhibition, Studio Job will transform two of the museum floors into an immersive design experience created expressly for MAD. The installation will include sculpture, lighting, furniture, floor coverings, wallpaper, drawings, and other objects designed over the past 16 years. Referencing the history of arts patronage, collecting, and display, the featured works will be presented as if in a collector's home—organized according not to chronology, but rather to imagined narratives that fuse elements of history, fantasy, irony, and autobiography.

In total, the exhibition will include 57 pieces. Four pieces will make their international debut with the MAD exhibition: *Pan* wall mirror (2015); *Pipe* table (2015); *Sex Cake* table lamp (2016); and *Sinking Ship* table (2016), along with four sketches and full-scale color

drawings—works of art in themselves—that document the artistic process. Four private commissions will be shown publically for the first time: *Pitchfork and Shovel* (2014) in cast bronze; *Heart* (2012–13) in stained glass; *Dr. Crützen Illuminator* (2011–12) in stained glass; and *Unity* cabinet (2011) in marquetry.

“Studio Job stands as one of the most distinctive contemporary design studios today,” said Ronald T. Labaco, MAD’s Marcia Docter Senior Curator. “Their exhibition concept organizes their work in loose, sometimes contradictory groupings around ideas such as ‘love/lust,’ ‘agrarian/preindustrial,’ and ‘church/religion.’ These fluid categories underscore Studio Job’s desire for visitors to bring their own interpretation and personal experience to the artwork on view, in effect creating a metamodern dialogue rooted in engagement and storytelling.”

Since 2000, Smeets and Tynagel have developed a distinctive body of highly expressive and opulent work that incorporates pattern, ornament, irony, monumentality, and provocation, as well as personal, historic, and sociocultural narrative. Their commitment to craftsmanship reflects an ongoing interest in the revival of traditional applied-arts practices, such as bronze casting, gilding, marquetry, stained glass, and faience, but with a contemporary perspective. The atelier operates in the manner of a traditional Old Master studio, engaging the skills of the most talented artisans in the production of their work.

“Unlike most designers working today, we’re not coming from modernism,” said Smeets. “Our contribution is that we’ve recovered a lost path. Is that design? Is that art? I’m not sure. For us, creation is more important than discipline, and with purpose and precision, we’re situating decorative arts within the twenty-first century.”

Highlights from the exhibition include:

- *Pipe*, 2015

This work will make its international debut with the MAD exhibition. In homage to compatriot René Magritte’s painting *The Treachery of Images (This Is Not a Pipe)*, Studio Job’s cast bronze sculpture plays with the same idea, that all visual representations are inherently abstract; it is neither a table nor a pipe.

- *Train Crash*, 2015

In *Train Crash* two cast bronze locomotives collide head-on, producing clouds of billowing smoke that merge to create a tabletop. This narrative falls in the autobiographical realm of Studio Job’s oeuvre; in June 2015 the design duo publicly announced the end of their long-term romantic relationship with the unveiling of this piece, which simultaneously underscores their continuing work partnership.

- *Burj Khalifa* from “Landmark,” 2009–14

Over 12 feet tall, this clock features a cast bronze King Kong, covered with 120,000 Swarovski crystals, scaling a silver-leaved Burj Khalifa, the world’s tallest building, in Dubai, as it projects from a cast bronze Petra, the ancient city in Jordan. As Smeets explained, “Architectural delights sprout from the rich culture of the Middle East. One

ancient, one contemporary, but equally important, man-made, worshipped, world wonders ...”

- *Piece for Peace*, 2010

Piece for Peace was commissioned as the centerpiece for the administrative office of the first President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, who also formerly served as Prime Minister of Belgium. The applied-arts past meets the design present in this collaboration with Belgian glass and crystal factory Val Saint Lambert (established in 1826), which combines hand-cut crystal with Studio Job’s trademark polished bronze elements, transforming a traditional presentation cup into a coffeepot topped with a hand peace-sign finial.

- *Pyramid* from “Pyramids of Makkum” for Royal Tichelaar Makkum, 2008

In Studio Job’s contemporary interpretation of a 17th-century delftware flower pyramid, ballooning clouds of steam and a flowing stream of water in gilt faience connect a surreal composition of blue-and-white glazed stacked elements such as a gravity-defying kettle, a coffeepot, a building, and a René Magritte–inspired pipe.

- *Perished Bench*, 2006

This bench, which opens in the style of a 15th-century Netherlandish triptych, is book-match veneered in a delicate and complex pattern of skeletons of extinct animals real and imagined, using the 21st-century method of computer-controlled laser cutting. The imagery conveys the theme of *memento mori*, the transience of life and material possessions, as found in 17th-century Dutch genre painting.

ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

A new monograph, *Studio Job: Monkey Business*, will be published by Rizzoli and Carpenters Workshop Gallery on the occasion of the exhibition. Tracing the creative vision of the studio over the past five years, the hardcover, 256-page book will include 200 sketches, concept renderings, and exquisite photographs along with contributions by Job Smeets (co-founder of Studio Job), Glenn Adamson (MAD’s Nanette L. Laitman Director), Ronald T. Labaco (MAD’s Marcia Docter Senior Curator), and Loïc Le Gaillard and Julien Lombrail (principals at Carpenters Workshop Gallery in London, Paris and New York and representatives of Studio Job since 2009.)

A book signing by Job Smeets and Nynke Tynagel will take place at the Museum on March 22, 2016.

EXHIBITION CREDITS

Studio Job MAD HOUSE is organized by the Museum of Arts and Design’s Marcia Docter Senior Curator, Ronald T. Labaco, with Project Managers Riva Arnold and Angelik Vizcarondo-Laboy.

Major support for *Studio Job MAD HOUSE* is provided by Marian C. Burke and KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, the Official Airline of MAD.

Additional support is generously provided by the Consulate General of the Netherlands in New York as part of the Dutch Culture USA program; Swarovski; Creative Industries Fund NL; Marcia and Richard Mishaan; Amy Gold and Brett Gorvy; and the Director's Circle and the International Council, two leading Museum support groups.

MAD gratefully acknowledges the in-kind support of Carpenters Workshop Gallery, Exposize, NLXL, and Chamber.

RELATED PROGRAMMING

In Conversation: Studio Job

Talk and Book Signing

Tuesday, March 22, 2016 – 7:00 pm

Free with Museum Admission

Theater at MAD

Join collaborators Job Smeets and Nynke Tynagel of Studio Job for an evening exploring their provocative body of work together with Dennis Freedman, Creative Director and Executive Vice President of Barneys New York.

Smeets and Tynagel will discuss the vision that sets them apart from other contemporary design studios, their collaborative relationship, the transdisciplinary space they occupy between art and design, and their Belgian atelier, where they utilize traditional applied-arts techniques such as bronze casting, stained glass, and marquetry to create works that reflect on the contemporary human condition.

A book signing of *Studio Job: Monkey Business* will follow the talk.

Designers Screenings

Part 1: Friday, May 13 – 7:00pm

Part 2: Friday, May 20 – 7:00pm

Theater at MAD

\$10 general / \$5 students & members

As part of the citywide festival NYCxDesign, MAD has invited design theorist Alexandra Midal to guest curate a two part cinema program titled *Designers Screenings*. Envisioned as a series of statements, *Designers Screenings* is a vibrant celebration of film and video created by designers. Expanding the boundaries of the design discipline, this selection of short films illustrates how the moving image has become a powerful medium for designers. The program follows the parallel rise of the design and cinema fields. Norman Bel Geddes, one of the first major industrial designers in the U.S., worked in Hollywood before opening his studio on Broadway, and iconic designer-architect Charles Eames directed air acrobatics scenes on Billy Wilder's *The Spirit of St. Louis* (and even helped write the movie's script). *Designers Screenings* pays tribute to the films realized by designers all over the world, and will present a selection of contemporary experimental shorts by Matali Crasset, El Ultimo Grito, Marguerite

Humeau, Onkar Kular, Alexandra Midal, Jasper Morisson, Sigurdarson, Noam Toran and Michaël Mouyal.

Q&As with Alexandra Midal will follow both screenings.

Designers Screenings is guest curated by Alexandra Midal in collaboration with Oui Design, an initiative of the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the United States, and in conjunction with the exhibition *Studio Job MAD HOUSE*.

The Building Blocks of Design

Saturday, May 14, 2016 – 11:00 am

Free with Museum Admission

4th-floor galleries

In art school, artists and designers are taught the basic building blocks for creating work, known as the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design. These 12 basic building blocks, from color and shape to contrast and harmony, underscore the production of work across various fields of creativity. Join MAD educators as they guide visitors through the exhibition *Studio Job MAD HOUSE*, introduce these terms, and explore how they relate to works created by Studio Job.

In High Esteem: A Guided Game of Curation

Friday, July 8, 2016 – 6:30 pm

Free with Museum Admission

5th-floor galleries

Why do people collect objects? What do collections say about individuals? Society? History? Examine these questions on an interactive “collecting journey” in the exhibition *Studio Job MAD HOUSE*. Inspired by questions asked by the duo behind Studio Job—Job Smeets and Nynke Tynagel—visitors will be guided by MAD educators as they explore motivations behind collecting to uncover symbols, signifiers, and icons that inform viewers’ experiences and value associations.

MADreads

Sunday, April 17, 2016, and Sunday, June 19, 2016 – 10:30 am to noon

Free with Museum Admission

MADreads is a literacy-based program for children and their adult companions. Come read a story with us and explore a related exhibition!

- **April 17:** What could you do with an idea? Discuss inspiration, confidence, and nurturing ideas of your own when we read *What Do You Do with an Idea?* by Kobi Yamada, illustrated by Mae Besom.
- **June 19:** Discuss the wonders of the creative process (and all its ups and downs) when we read *The Most Magnificent Thing* by Ashley Spires.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN

The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) champions contemporary makers across creative fields, presenting artists, designers, and artisans who apply the highest level of ingenuity and skill to their work. Since the Museum's founding in 1956 by philanthropist and visionary Aileen Osborn Webb, MAD has celebrated all facets of making and the creative processes by which materials are transformed, from traditional techniques to cutting-edge technologies. Today, the Museum's curatorial program builds upon a rich history of exhibitions that emphasize a cross-disciplinary approach to art and design, and reveals the workmanship behind the objects and environments that shape our everyday lives. MAD provides an international platform for practitioners who are influencing the direction of cultural production and driving 21st-century innovation, fostering a participatory setting for visitors to have direct encounters with skilled making and compelling works of art and design.

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