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**SCHWEIZERISCHES ARCHITEKTURMUSEUM
/SWISS ARCHITECTURE MUSEUM**

S AM

INVITATION TO THE PRESS PREVIEW

»THE WORLD OF MADELON VRIESENDORP« Paintings, Postcards, Objects, Games 1967 - Today

Curated by Shumon Basar und Stephan Trüby
Originated at the Architectural Association, London.

S AM Swiss Architecture Museum
16.01.2009 – 14.06.2009

SKYSCRAPERS have sex and are caught in flagrant délit. Between a pink torso and a buffed-up American GI, a nun is spitting fire. Synchronised swimmers, prize-winning vegetables, and the mythic 'making of' Manhattan are all celebrated on countless postcards, alongside a home-diagnosis kit that combines the veneer of Freudian insight with the depth of Trivial Pursuit. Welcome to the The World of Madelon Vriesendorp, an exhibition that for the first time ever, brings together the London based, Dutch-born artist's wildly diverse practices from the past forty years.

As one of the founding members of the Office for Metropolitan Architecture in 1975 (together with Rem Koolhaas and Elia and Zoe Zenghelis), Vriesendorp's painting *Flagrant Délit*—in which the Chrysler and Empire State buildings are caught red-handed, in post-coital embrace, by the Rockefeller Centre that features in Koolhaas' book *Delirious New York*—constitutes one of the most beguiling attempts to depict the unconscious, double-life of Modern architecture. However, there is a significant body of work preceding and following this celebrated period that has remained largely unseen by the public eye.

The exhibition includes 50 paintings and drawings, dating from 1967 to today; two collections of Americana postcards (approx. 8,000 in total) collected by Vriesendorp and Koolhaas in New York during the 1970s that form an accidental archaeology of the USA; a long-lost 1980 animation, co-authored with Teri Wehn-Damisch, entitled *Flagrant Délit* that tells the torrid tale of Manhattan's most infamous skyscrapers as an anthropomorphic surrealist melodrama. Additionally there is Vriesendorp's astounding 'Archive' of miniature objects, models and figurines (numbering in the 1,000s) that includes an Indian Minnie Mouse in regional dress fraternizing with a winged Father Christmas. A special, interactive installation is also to be found: a life-size, incarnation of the self-penned psychological diagnosis kit, 'The Mind Game'.

Vriesendorp's secret, wayward world of playground surrealism is a secret no more. This exhibition brings together four decades worth of evocative and witty work for the first time. Vriesendorp's 'art of generosity' embraces bad taste and the touching beauty of culture's failed objects. Here, enlightenment emerges from distraction, whilst seriousness must surrender to the non-serious. The exhibition at S AM will also include previously unseen new works.

The curators, Shumon Basar (Cultural Projects director, Architectural Association) and Stephan Trüby (Stuttgart based architect/theorist), gained unique access to Vriesendorp's extraordinary studio/archive in North London: a private cosmology of found and invented symbols and stories. According to Hans Ulrich Obrist, Madelon Vriesendorp is an 'almost unknown artist genius'. This exhibition, which originated at the Architectural Association in London, aims to redress this discrepancy and situate Vriesendorp in her rightful place within late 20th century culture.

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PRESS QUOTES

"As pivotal to our memories of the architecture of the city as Piranesi or Metropolis."

THE FINANCIAL TIMES

"A peerless evocation of the sexuality of architecture; it's the real sex and the city."

BLUEPRINT MAGAZINE

"The World of Madelon Vriesendorp teases out bittersweet narratives from arrangements of objects and images. Vriesendorp's Manhattan is almost always unpeopled, the behemoths of Modernism's old guard cast as performers who are both flawed and as fickle as their inhabitants."

FRIEZE MAGAZINE

DATES AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Museum Night, 16.01.2009: 18:00 – 02:00

6:00pm–7:00pm : Vernissage for children S AM & Kunsthalle Basel

8:30pm–9:30pm : Madelon Vriesendorp presents!

Guided Tours in the exhibition:

22.01.	6pm	/ German	7pm	/ English
07.02.	2.30pm	/ German	3.30pm	/ English
12.02.	6.00pm	/ German	7.00pm	/ English
28.02.	2.30pm	/ German	3.30pm	/ English
12.03.	6.00pm	/ German	7.00pm	/ English
21.03.	2.30pm	/ German	3.30pm	/ English

CONTACT

Please contact us for images, interviews and further information.

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Opening Hours:

Tue/Wed/Fri	11am – 6.00pm
Thu	11am – 8.30pm
Sa/Sun	11am – 5.00pm