Lynda and Stewart Resnick Exhibition Pavilion

Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Los Angeles

The latest addition to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art campus is a powerful reminder of why the art world continues to hold Renzo Piano in high esteem. The pavilion gives the institution a vast and versatile space for temporary exhibitions, and if it is not the Italian architect's greatest work, it does bring a refreshing sense of unity and clarity to the west side of the 20-acre site, which until two years ago had been separated from the main buildings by a street.

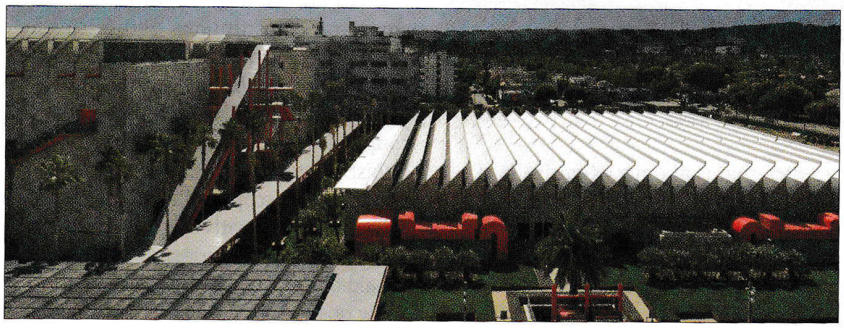
The $53 million building is a single-story, 45,000-square-foot structure illuminated by north-facing windows set into a sawtooth roof. Although the Resnick Pavilion is not attached to the nearby Broad Contemporary Art Museum, also designed by Piano, the two structures are visually connected by pale travertine marble walls, bright red exterior appointments, and a surrounding palm garden laid out by artist Robert Irwin.

With a high ceiling and no fixed interior walls, the building is expected to accommodate a wide variety of art from antiquity to the present. The three inaugural exhibitions, designed to demonstrate the versatility of the space, suggest that large-scale works will be most at home.

With a clean, modern installation, "Fashioning Fashion: European Dress in Detail, 1700–1915" (through March 6) features a fascinating introduction to a major collection recently acquired by the museum. "Eye for the Sensual: Selections from the Resnick Collection" (through January 9) contains some strong examples of French Rococo painting and European sculpture from the eclectic holdings of the building's principal donors. But the sumptuous houselike setting, meant to contextualize, more often overwhelms the art.

"Olmec: Colossal Masterworks of Ancient Mexico" (through January 9) offers several basalt portrait heads of Olmec rulers and an array of smaller objects. These monumental ancient sculptures became the spectacular centerpiece in the new space.

—Suzanne Muchnic



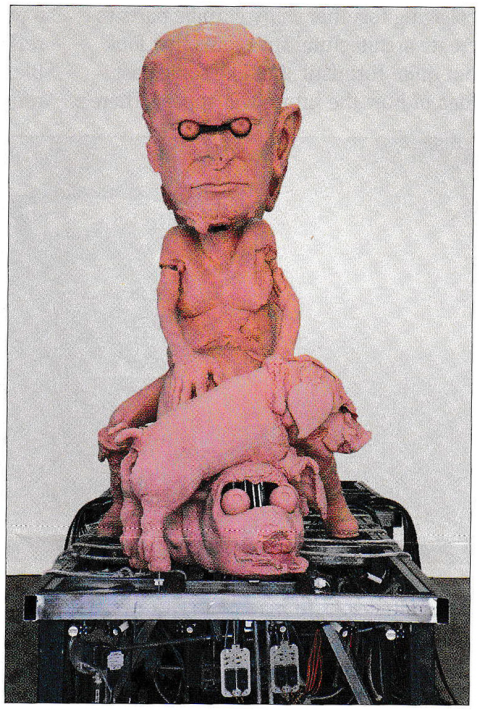
Lynda and Stewart Resnick Exhibition Pavilion, designed by Renzo Piano. Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Paul McCarthy

L&M Arts
Los Angeles

Paul McCarthy's scatological sensibility may be familiar, but he hasn't lost the ability to unsettle and even shock.

The artist's most recent tableau of terror, seven years in the making, is a nine-foot-tall automaton of George W. Bush, nude apart from his boots, mechanically sodomizing a sow, which is also being raped in the head by a smaller pig with a human hand and a cloven hoof. As if this were insufficiently disconcerting, there is an identical rendition in action, the two components coupled like cars on a train, each pumping away in silent, mindless rhythm. When orgasm arrives, Bush's head spins slowly around and his mouth opens and closes with apparent satiety. Made of a rubbery substance the color of bologna and titled *Train, Mechanical* (2003–10), the 18-foot-long contraption offers a literal but nonetheless discomfiting metaphor for the former president's behavior.



Paul McCarthy, *Train, Mechanical* (detail), 2003–10, steel, platinum silicone, fiberglass, rope, and electrical and mechanical components, 9' 1" x 18' 7" x 5'. L&M Arts.

Featured in the second gallery space, McCarthy's *Ship of Fools, Ship Adrift* (2010) consists of Hummel-style children in a boat, their heads pierced by metal pistons. The massive bronze sculpture appears covered in thick black ooze, recalling the recent Gulf oil spill. Fitting to such strangeness, the red brick building—renovated and redesigned by architect Kulapat Yantrasast for this new outpost of the New York gallery—had once been the home of sci-fi author Ray Bradbury.

Another Hummel-inspired bronze sculpture of children, distorted and entwined with tree trunks, stood on the front lawn, but seemed tame compared to McCarthy's hideous yet compelling goings-on inside.

—Hunter Drohojowska-Philp

David Trautrimas

DNJ
Los Angeles

Toronto-based artist David Trautrimas has a fascination with space-age design, from sci-fi movie sets to 1950s household appliances. Taking images of such familiar objects as vacuum cleaners and refrigerators, he alters them digitally,