

NEW
235 BOWERY
NEW YORK NY
10002 USA
MUSEUM

TEL +1 212.219.1222.
FAX +1 212.431.5326.
newmuseum.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 16, 2011

PRESS CONTACTS:

Gabriel Einsohn, Communications Director
press@newmuseum.org
Andrea Schwan, Andrea Schwan Inc.
info@andreaschwan.com

New Museum Presents Charles Atlas' "Joints Array," a New Video Installation Featuring Footage of Merce Cunningham

New York, NY... This summer, the New Museum will present "**Joints Array**" a multimedia installation by the groundbreaking video artist **Charles Atlas** (b. 1949, St. Louis, Missouri). For more than forty years, Atlas has explored the possibilities of filmed movement and time-based portraiture through a melding of narrative, fiction, documentation, technological innovation, and precise editing. Since 2003, he has been creating live-edited works presented in the exhibition space, as a performance, and, later on, as completed works. Atlas's films, videos, installations, performances, set, and lighting designs have involved collaborations with leading figures in



Charles Atlas, *Joints Array*, 2011. Video installation, dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist and Vilma Gold, London

dance, music, and art, including Cunningham, Marina Abramović, Antony and the Johnsons, Leigh Bowery, Michael Clark, Fennesz, Bill Irwin, John Kelly, Yvonne Rainer, and, most recently, Mika Tajima and New Humans. "**Charles Atlas: Joints Array**" will be on view in the ground-floor gallery at the New Museum from **July 14–August 28, 2011**, and is curated by **Jenny Moore, Assistant Curator**.

Atlas began working for his mentor and collaborator Merce Cunningham as an assistant stage manager in the early 1970s and was filmmaker-in-residence for Cunningham's dance company from 1978 to 1983. On the occasion of Cunningham's death in 2009, Atlas revisited his earliest films of the dancer and made *Joints 4tet for Ensemble*, a four-channel installation of synchronized videos choreographed across ten variously sized monitors. For the New Museum exhibition, Atlas will expand upon this earlier work by presenting a new installation of the original four videos as large-scale projections and on a multitude of variously sized monitors. The exhibition features excerpts of Atlas's first Super 8 color films of Cunningham: filmic experiments shot while the dancer was taking a break from rehearsals. Close-up

shots of Cunningham's wrist, elbow, ankle, and knee capture the dancer's unique style of movement and function as a fractured portrait of motion and form that varies in tempo and scale. The soundtrack comprises unpublished ambient recordings by Cunningham's life partner, the avant-garde composer John Cage, from cities the pair visited together. Theatrical lights define the space and shape the experience of the images moving across the array of screens. Intimate, poignant, and provocative, the videos stand in distinct contrast to the more formal collaborations between Atlas and Cunningham that comprise the bulk of their work together. "Joints Array" transforms a casual interaction between dancer and filmmaker into a vivid performance of personal and cultural importance.

This is Charles Atlas's first New York museum presentation in fifteen years. His videos and installations have been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Tate Modern, London; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London; and the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. Recent presentations include a solo exhibition at Vilma Gold, London; a collaborative exhibition with Mika Tajima and New Humans at South First Gallery, London; and a collaboration with Michael Clark in the Turbine Hall at the Tate Modern, London.

Related Public Programming

June 26 | 2 PM

Hail the New Puritan Screening with Charles Atlas and Matt Wolf in Conversation:

Organized by Wu Tsang

In conjunction with the Wu Tsang artist residency this June, a screening of Charles Atlas's *Hail the New Puritan* (1985–86) will be followed by a conversation that explores new possibilities of narrative expression in documentary filmmaking with Atlas and artist Matt Wolf.

Exhibition Support

"Charles Atlas: Joints Array" is made possible, in part, by the generous support of the Producers Council of the New Museum.

About the New Museum

The New Museum is the only museum in New York City exclusively devoted to contemporary art. Founded in 1977, the New Museum was conceived as a center for exhibitions, information, and documentation about living artists from around the world. From its beginnings as a one-room office on Hudson Street to the inauguration of its first freestanding, dedicated building on the Bowery designed by SANAA in 2007, the New Museum continues to be a place of ongoing experimentation and a hub of new art and new ideas.

###