

For Immediate Release

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**Kansas City's Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art Presents
Poignant Videos by Swedish Artist Johanna Billing**

***Johanna Billing: Taking Turns* opens November 21**

Swedish artist and founder of the independent music label Make It Happen, Johanna Billing creates breathtaking, poignant videos and films that address issues of individuality,



This Is How We Walk on the Moon (still), 2007; single-channel video projection, 27 minutes, 20 seconds (loop); Courtesy of the artist and Kavi Gupta Gallery, Chicago

isolation, public performance, and decisive action—or inaction—in the context of collective endeavors. The exhibition of seven works by Johanna Billing is on view November 21, 2008–February 1, 2009, at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City, Missouri. Museum admission is free.

The exhibition opens with a free public reception, 5:30–7:30 p.m., Friday, November 21, at the Kemper

Museum of Contemporary Art, 4420 Warwick Boulevard, Kansas City, Missouri.

For each work of art, Billing invites people to participate in contrived situations that often involve familiar, group activities, such as packing and moving anonymous belongings from an apartment, singing at choir practice, or engaging in dance rehearsals. Through her documentary-style fictions, Billing reveals the ambiguous struggles—individual, social, and political—underlying the human condition in contemporary society. In the exhibition's most recent work *This Is How We Walk on the Moon* (2007), a group of local musicians learns to
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sail in the Firth of Forth, off the coast of Edinburgh, Scotland. Set to the 1980s song of the same title by the late experimental musician Arthur Russell, Billing's video explores the romanticism of the sea and the novice seafarers' first steps into uncharted territory.

Born 1973 in Jönköping, Sweden, Billing lives in Stockholm, Sweden. Earlier this year, her work *Project for a Revolution* (2000) was included in the exhibition *Here We Dance* at Tate Modern in London (March 14–May 26, 2008). Billing has also been included in numerous exhibitions worldwide, such as the 9th Istanbul Biennial (2005), the First Moscow Biennial of Contemporary Art (2005), and P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, New York (2006), among others.

Works in the exhibition

This Is How We Walk on the Moon, 2007

single-channel video projection, 27 minutes, 20 seconds (loop)
group learning to sail off the coast of Edinburgh, Scotland

Magical World, 2005

single-channel video on liquid crystal display, 6 minutes 12 seconds (loop)
Croatian children's choir, screened at 9th Istanbul Biennial and P.S. 1 Contemporary Art

Magic & Loss, 2005

single-channel video projection, 16 minutes, 52 seconds (loop)
people packing up an apartment in Amsterdam, screened at 9th Istanbul Biennial

You Don't Love Me Yet, 2002–08, including *You Don't Love Me Yet*, 2003 [single-channel video installation, 7 minutes, 3 seconds (loop)]

In this archive presentation, the film version of the project of multiple artists covering the song *You Don't Love Me Yet* by Roky Erickson as well as around 200 existing live versions from an ongoing tour are on display.

Where She Is At, 2001

single-channel video projection, 7 minutes, 35 seconds (loop)
woman contemplates jumping off a tall diving platform

Project for a Revolution, 2000

single-channel video projection, 3 minutes, 14 seconds (loop)
group of young people waiting in a room

Graduate Show, 1999

single-channel video on liquid crystal display, 3 minutes, 20 seconds
Billing and fellow graduating students rehearse a dance, created by choreographer Anna Vnuk

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For general information about the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, visit www.kemperart.org.

Free Educational Programs

Opening Reception and Musical Performance

5:30–7:30 p.m., Friday, November 21 (free)

Many of Billing's works feature collaborative projects and music. For the reception for *Taking Turns*, musician J. Ashley Miller has organized a special musical collective consisting of 4 fathers and their sons. The collective uses the universal dialect of music to explore and amplify the phenomenon of paternal transmission.

In Focus: Michael Rush

12:30–1:30 p.m., Saturday, November 22 (free)

(Please note the new time for this talk.)

Epperson Auditorium, Kansas City Art Institute (4415 Warwick Boulevard)

Michael Rush, scholar, curator, and director of Brandeis University's Rose Art Museum, talks about the history and theoretical considerations behind moving-image art, including themes explored in his book *Video Art* (Thames & Hudson).

Late Night University

9:00 p.m.–midnight, Saturday, December 6 (free)

Tonight, the Kemper Museum stays open late especially for college students. Spend an evening enjoying food, beverage, and live music by Kansas City's contemporary electronic musician J. Ashley Miller. In between performances, there are prize drawings and other surprise events. No reservation is required.

Family Day: Dance Happens

4:00–6:00 p.m., Saturday, December 27 (free)

Beat the winter blues and enjoy a performance by the dance company Kacico Dance. Responding to Billing's works, dancers perform several improvisational and choreographed pieces. As a finale, audience members are invited to participate.

Family Tour Hour

2:00–3:00 p.m., Saturday, January 10 (free)

A Museum docent conducts a special tour designed for families. Learn together about Billing's work. Contact Beth Harris at 816-457-6134 or bharris@kemperart.org to make reservations for this program.

Family Fun Artshops

2:00–3:30 p.m., Saturday, January 17 (free)

Designed for families with children of all ages, the Family Fun Artshop allows families to learn about exhibitions and create works of art. Contact Beth Harris at 816-457-6134 or bharris@kemperart.org to make reservations for this program.

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Feed Your Mind

12:30–1:30 p.m., Friday, January 23 (free)

During this lunch-hour program, Dr. Shannon Jackson, associate professor of anthropology at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, discusses her research on the relationship between embodiment and creativity and responds to the various social contexts in which Billing's works are based. Contact Beth Harris at 816-457-6134 or bharris@kemperart.org to make reservations for this program.

Guests may order a \$10.00 box lunch from Café Sebastienne with a credit card. Please specify if a vegetarian option is preferred. No outside food or drink is permitted.

Thank you

The exhibition is made possible by M&I Bank, the Kemper Museum's 2008 Exhibition Series Sponsor.

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About the Kemper Museum

Kansas City's renowned free modern and contemporary art museum, the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art opened in October 1994 and draws more than 120,000 visitors each year. The Museum boasts a rapidly growing permanent collection of modern and contemporary works of artists from around the world. Permanent collection artists include Louise Bourgeois, Petah Coyne, Nan Goldin, Willem de Kooning, Hung Liu, Morris Louis, Joan Mitchell, Georgia O'Keeffe, Tom Otterness, Jaume Plensa, Matthew Ritchie, and Wayne Thiebaud. The Museum hosts temporary exhibitions, installations, performance work, film and video series, lectures, concerts, children's workshops, and other creative programs designed to both entertain and challenge.

The Museum (4420 Warwick Blvd.) is open 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Tuesday–Thursday; 10:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m., Friday–Saturday; and 11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Sunday. Café Sebastienne, a four-star restaurant, serves lunch 11:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m., Tuesday–Sunday; and dinner 5:30–9:30 p.m., Friday–Saturday. The Museum and Café are closed on Mondays and major holidays.

Kemper at the Crossroads (33 W. 19th Street) is open noon–6:00 p.m., Thursday; noon–8:00 p.m., Friday; noon–6:00 p.m., Saturday. It is closed Sunday–Wednesday.

The galleries of Kemper East (200 E. 44th Street) are open 10:00 a.m.–4 p.m., Tuesday–Friday.

Admission to all three locations is free.

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