

Beat: Music

BJÖRK, A-ONE-OF-A-KIND ARTIST

OPENS TODAY AT MoMa

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USPA NEWS - The prodigious musical phenomenon Björk is the most avant-garde popular artist of her time, the creative force behind extraordinary music videos and also one of the most instinctive of talents.

She probably should have trusted her first response "" No thanks "" when the Museum of Modern Art came calling but she didn't. Evidently, the museum first floated the idea of an exhibition of her work in 2000 and she finally said yes in 2012. Three years later, a cramped overview, which opens today, has been jammed into a tacky little two-story pavilion specially built in the Modern's atrium. Björk should have said no "" not because her work isn't museum-worthy but because, as proved here, the Modern is not up to the task.

The show is billed as a "midcareer survey,"^[1] but its disappointing catalog indicates little of the research, documentation or context setting that such projects usually entail, and the exhibition hasn't been allotted the necessary gallery space.

Given the number of Björk fans it will probably attract, the show's future as a logistical nightmare seems clear. It was already indicated at the preview on Tuesday night.

The show was organized by the multi-titled Klaus Biesenbach, director of MoMA PS1 and the curator at large at MoMA itself, and a great advocate for all things intramedia, cross-disciplinary, collaborative, interactive and esthetically relational.

the Björk exhibition stands as a glaring symbol of the museum's urge to be all things to all people, its disdain for its core audience, its frequent curatorial slackness and its indifference to the handling of crowds and the needs of its visitors. To force this show, even in its current underdone state, into the atrium's juggernaut of art, people and poor design is little short of hostile. It superficially promotes the Modern's hipness while making the place even more unpleasant than usual. Given that the pavilion seems designed to comfortably hold around 300 to 350 people, those Björk fans are going to spend a great deal of time waiting in line or, worse, near the pavilion.

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