



SYDNEY — The **Biennale of Sydney** has appointed **David Elliott** artistic director of the 2010 biennale. Elliott is a U.K.-born curator currently based in London, Berlin, and Istanbul. He has worked as the director of the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford, the Moderna Museet in Stockholm, and the Istanbul Museum of Modern Art. He was the founding director of the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo and served as the president of CIMAM — International Committee of ICOM for Museums of Modern and Contemporary Art — for six years.

<http://www.artinfo.com/>

Bio

David Elliott (1949–) is a British-born art gallery and museum curator. After studying history at the University of Durham, and History of Art at the Courtauld Institute of Art Elliott worked as an exhibitions officer at the Arts Council of Great Britain, after which he served as director of the Museum of Modern Art, Oxford from 1976 to 1996. Elliott's programme at Oxford included exhibitions of art from Latin America, Asia, South Africa, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Elliott was then Director of the Moderna Museet (Museum of Modern Art) in Stockholm from 1996 to 2001. From 1998 to 2004 he was President of CIMAM [the International Committee of ICOM for Museums of Modern and Contemporary Art]. In the 90's he curated a big exhibition 'Art and Power' exploring the relationship of Art with the totalitarian regimes in Europe in the first half of the 20th century. The exhibition was shown in various museums across the world. Between 2001 and 2006 Elliott was the director of Tokyo's Mori Art Museum, a large privately-endowed museum devoted to contemporary - particularly Asian - art, architecture and design. He was recently appointed Director of Istanbul Modern starting January 2007, a post which he resigned from on October 16th, 2007. Elliott is Artistic Director for the 17th Biennale of Sydney, 'THE BEAUTY OF DISTANCE: Songs of Survival in a Precarious Age' which will take place 12 May - 1 August 2010. Kanae Hasegawa

<http://connect.in.com/david-elliott-curator/biography-68697.html>

Interview with David Elliott, Director of Mori Art Museum, Tokyo

http://www.studio-international.co.uk/museology/david_elliott.asp

Since it opened in October 2003, the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo has attracted 750,000 visitors for its inaugural exhibition 'Happiness: a survival guide for art and life'. This figure is surprising considering that the Mori Museum does not have an art collection of its own. All the art works for the inaugural exhibition were loaned from national and international art institutions and private collectors.

The fact that the Mori is situated on the top two floors of the 53-storey high Mori Tower - situated right in the middle of the capital with direct access from the metro and the dual attractions of the museum and the breathtaking view of Tokyo from the observation deck (both situated on the 52nd floor) - no doubt helped the museum to get a stronger attendance despite an entrance fee of £8. The museum's bold decision to open late (until 10 pm on weekdays and until midnight at the weekend) also helped to pull in a new audience. For the office workers who work in the Mori Tower, being able to pop in and have a look at what's happening in the museum must be truly convenient.

The museum has benefited from extensive media coverage from TV, newspapers and magazines of all sorts. It has also proved popular with the overseas residents of Tokyo. The Mori Museum has certainly created an alternative choice to put on the Tokyoite's cultural nightlife calendar along with the cinemas and theatres.

It is quite ironic to consider that it is a foreigner who has grabbed the heart of the Japanese public. The man who has orchestrated the museum's howling success is Mori Director David Elliott - a Brit and the first foreign director in a Japanese art institution. Elliott is well known for his remarkable past successes in the UK, culminating in his period as Director of the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford.

The strong attendance at the Mori underpinned all that David Elliott said during our meeting. In his own words, 'The Japanese public are intellectual and do have an interest and mind for contemporary art but the art institutions in Japan seemed not to have been able to provide an appropriate way to introduce contemporary art to them'. Since taking his post in November 2001, David Elliott has strenuously visited museums and galleries in Tokyo and has actively attended the gallery openings, talking to young artists, art critics and the public. He must have been fully aware that in the minds of the majority of Japanese people, art is still stuck in the first half of the 20th century 'Modern' art. The Japanese public flock to museum exhibitions which bring art collections from renowned or established museums. The MoMA exhibition held in Tokyo in 2001 attracted 500,000 visitors over four months. More recently, the Monet/Renoir exhibition had 2,300 visitors on an average day, an immense figure considering that it was held at a regional museum and when exhibitions on contemporary art in the capital have an average attendance of only 300 to 400 a day. Even frequent museum visitors in Japan are happy to follow what the authorities define as 'important' art without ever questioning it. Amid such circumstances, it must have been a huge challenge for David Elliott to take the helm of directorship and open a museum dedicated to contemporary art.

First, the Mori's decision not to have its own art collections quite shocked the art world. David Elliott points out the current dilemma surrounding modern art museums - that they have art collections which are of value but that those collections can sometimes hamper a museum's activity. Of course, museums can use their collections for guaranteed display but the point about contemporary art is that it is so wide-ranging - from fragile thread to mechanical machines, paintings to dead animals, installations to architectural works - that issues about conservation and storage have to be considered. And the thing about contemporary art is that it is always in a state of

flux. As David Elliott says, 'Once we start collecting, the more you have, the more it gets valuable and that will stop us from responding to the present and taking on new ideas what the artists are doing now.' But he does not rule out the possibility of having collections in the future.

Elliott hopes the Mori will function as a mediator of contemporary art: reacting to what is going on 'now'. In his opinion, 'We are concerned with the relationship between art and life. Contemporary art is only intelligible in terms of its relationship to our life. We would like to communicate to the public that there are many things about contemporary art which is related to our life.'

'One thing I realised through my visits to galleries and exhibitions in Japan, was that although the quality of Japanese contemporary art is very high, there do not seem to be enough discussions among the artists, critics and the audience about contemporary art.'

This applies not just to contemporary art but to art in general. Art education in Japanese schools lacks a curriculum that facilitates students' involvement and interaction with art. Elliott believes that, 'The educator and the public need to have an opportunity to discuss why certain art is important. Unless you are a born connoisseur of art, you will not be able to judge by yourself why certain art is superior to other art'. As his statement emphasises, the Mori Museum is on a mission to become a platform for discussion on the art and culture of our time. Obviously the exhibition is an important part of the Mori's activity, but the exhibition will not be a stand-alone. It will be complemented by discussion with the audience, which the Mori aims to do in the form of symposia with the participating artists and curators, or workshops given by the artist. By doing so, the Mori Museum aims to let the audience itself become an important element in the process of creating art.

Elliott continues, 'I agree that contemporary art may not be simple to understand, but if it is presented in the right way people can enjoy a lot. We want people to experience art and think about it. The art reflects our time, it is about our culture. We may not like our times or many aspects of the time we live in but that is not the fault of art as such'.

To reach out to as wide audience as possible, David Elliott will realise extensive thought-provoking programmes to encourage public involvement. The inaugural exhibition 'Happiness', flowed out of the museum's white cube and extended to an open-air 'Happiness' flea market, to a cookery workshop, and to schools programmes, all of which aimed to help new art audiences access contemporary art by blurring the boundary of what is art and what is daily activity. The flea market was a success, attracting shoppers who may well have had no previous interest in contemporary art. The newest exhibition, 'Roppongi Crossing: New visions of Contemporary Japanese Art 2004' is a showcase of 57 Japanese contemporary creators working in diverse genres from fashion, music, media art to design and architecture. It takes an interactive approach inviting the public to participate in the exhibition by voting for their favourite work and awarding a prize.

During his career as the Director of the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford and the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Stockholm, David Elliott organised exhibitions on non-Western art such as Japanese post-war avant-garde and African art, which at that time were still marginal for audiences in Europe, and so played an important role in introducing those arts to the West. When asked what exhibitions he plans to stage over the next six months, Elliott says, 'We will organise exhibitions and public programmes which will communicate with the audience, trying to illuminate and make clear what the relationship between art and our life is. We will not tell the audience what to do, people can make up their own minds. But we will give people the tools with which to experience art better if they want to and let people have the freedom to approach art of their time'.

Over the next two years, he will curate exhibitions such as 'Modern Means: Continuity and Change in Art from 1880 to Now' (which will be a loan exhibition from MoMA) 'Hot'n'spicy: Contemporary Art from Asia' as well as organising travelling exhibitions such as 'Ilya and Emilia

Kabakov: 'Where is our place?' and 'In and Out of Africa: Contemporary art from Africa and beyond', all with the aim of being shown not only to the Japanese public but also to an international audience.

The Mori is also committed to discovering and promoting young international artists and giving them an opportunity to show their creativity to the wider public. Similar to the Moderna Museet Projekt which he established in Stockholm, David Elliott has rolled out the Mori Art Museum (MAM) Project to make the Mori a production site for art. Curated by one of the Mori curators each year, the MAM project will be an ongoing scheme to commission four or five international young artists a year to produce works and to ultimately show their works in the form of a solo exhibition, using not just the interior of the museum but the public spaces for a venue. The first MAM Project has just opened to the public, showcasing the work of Milwaukee-based artist, Santiago Cucullu. As part of finding young talents in art, David Elliott himself has been actively participating in an external competition, acting as a judge for the artist-scouting festival organised by Takashi Murakami and an international competition on the 'Art of Martini glass design'.

As a Japanophile from the time he was an art student at Oxford, David Elliott has a strong interest not only in Japanese art of Edo period but also in classical Chinese, Indian and East Asian art that, according to Elliott 'was totally unknown in the West in the 80s'. It could be said that 'Happiness', his first exhibition in Japan was an attempt to offer to the Japanese audience the same experience and fascination he had when he first came across Asian art.

'I think it is about time for Tokyo to show its presence as a cultural centre to the rest of the world'. David Elliott is already starting to plan ahead to set out where the Museum will be in the next ten years. It will certainly be worth watching in the future, and other museum directors will be keen to know what David Elliott is planning and what they can draw upon in the increasingly competitive forum of contemporary art.

May 18, 2009

A conversation with renowned art curator David Elliott

We recently caught up with David Elliott, the British-born, globetrotting curator. A major tastemaker in the contemporary art world, Elliott has been the director at the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo, Japan and at the Istanbul Modern in Turkey, helping introduce a fresh approach to contemporary art in both cities. Elliott's current post is artistic director for the 17th Biennale of Sydney, an important contemporary art exhibition opening in 2010 in Australia.

Q: You were the director of the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo and the Istanbul Modern in the early years of both museums. How did these museums change the art scenes in their respective cities?

A: I spent five years in Tokyo setting up and programming the Mori Art Museum. It provided a new and popular perspective on modern and contemporary art that was of a high quality and accessible to the general public. It bridged the gap between the Japanese and international audience while devising its programs from a uniquely Japanese perspective. I stayed at the Istanbul Modern as Director for nine months and while I believe it has great potential to fulfill a similar task from a

Turkish perspective, under the conditions that prevailed at that time it was not possible for me to achieve this potential.

Q: You are currently the artistic director for the 17th Biennale of Sydney, which opens in May 2010. What's your vision for the exhibition, which is entitled "The Beauty of Distance: Songs of Survival in a Precarious Age"?

A: The 17th Biennale of Sydney will take place in venues and sites around the world famous Harbour, which is also the site of the first encounters the European explorers had with the people who lived there. Situated in the heart of the city, in a land that has traditionally regarded distance as a disadvantage, it will include art from around the world and examine the significance of distance in a number of different ways.

Firstly, distance allows us to be ourselves despite the many capacities we share. We are all the same, yet different and it is our differences that make us—according to the circumstances—beautiful, terrifying, attractive, boring, sexy, unsettling, fascinating, challenging, funny, stimulating, horrific, or even many of these at once. I would like to celebrate this. More importantly, the idea of distance expresses the condition of art itself. Art is of life, runs parallel to life and is sometimes about life. But, for art to be art (a medium of numinous, sometimes symbolic power), it must maintain a distance from life. Without distance, art has no authority and is no longer special. As art depends on the beauty of distance, beauty in art—a resolution of energy, thought and feeling in aesthetic form—depends on distance as well. Beauty itself can, at times, be terrible as well as alluring. Art can reflect the strongest of emotions, the most upsetting of events and nobody gets hurt.

The subtitle of the Biennale—"Songs of Survival in a Precarious Age"—explores the affirmative power of art in the face of unprecedented threats: conflict, famine, inequity, environmental despoliation and global warming. This title is inspired by experimental film maker, anthropologist and musicologist Harry Everett Smith (1923-91) whose boxed set of historic recordings American Folk Music appeared in 1952 at the height of the Korean war and of Senator McCarthy's political witch hunts in the USA. Drawing on blues, jazz, gospel and different forms of folk music from people of many origins living across the USA, Smith traced a modern world with very different values from those he saw around him. In doing this, he provided guidance and inspiration for generations of future artists, musicians and listeners.

Q: For travelers who may not be familiar with biennales and the Biennale of Sydney, why should they consider visiting Australia during the exhibition and what can they look forward to?

A: Visitors will experience a major exhibition of contemporary art from an Asian/Pacific perspective that reflects the actual state of contemporary art and the worlds around it. The Biennale is embedded in the fabric of the city, including Cockatoo Island, a heritage site which used to be both a prison and a ship yard, and is in a conversation with the history of the city and its future creative potential. A program of related concerts, performances, films and events will coincide with the Biennale.

Q: What do you think makes Sydney a great city?

A: The combination of primordial nature in the Royal Botanic Gardens, where cockatoos, possums and flying foxes as well as the sub-tropical flora of the region have their habitat, with the Harbour, its bridge, the Sydney Opera House, and high-rise buildings by such renowned architects as Norman Foster, Renzo Piano and Harry Seidler, is breathtaking.

Q: What's your favorite museum in Sydney?

A: This has to be a draw between the Art Gallery of New South Wales and the Museum of Contemporary Art. Both will host parts of the Biennale.

Q: What would be a perfect day in Sydney?

A: A perfect day would be to go out on a boat to the headlands at the mouth of the Harbour, swim a little in one of the many coves and to round it off with a meal of local oysters and Australian Sauvignon Blanc in one of the small restaurants around the harbour. Alternatively, a pub crawl around the Rocks ending up at the Lord Nelson, which has a great restaurant and brews its own beer, would not be bad.

Q: ...in Istanbul?

A: In Istanbul, I would go first to look at the Byzantine architecture, frescos, and mosaics at the Chora Church and also walk along the old city walls nearby, I would then visit the Hagia Sophia [Aya Sofya], originally a Basilica built by the Emperor Constantine, then a mosque, now a museum, and walk round some of the small mosques designed in the mid-16th century by Mimar Sinan in the same area. The best of these have beautiful painted tiles, such as the one tucked away in the corner of the small square opposite the Spice Market. I would then either take a boat up the Bosphorus to the mouth of the Black Sea or go to some of the small restaurants and bars around Taksim Square.

Q: ...in Tokyo?

A: In Tokyo, my perfect day would be to visit the Taniguchi Pavilion [Gallery of Horyuji Treasures] in the Tokyo National Museum in Ueno Park, walk up the hill to the old cemetery of Yanaka, visit the old temples round it and some of the contemporary art galleries while stopping off at a small udon restaurant which is over one hundred years old. I would start my evening in Roppongi's SuperDeluxe bar and performance space (also featuring in the Biennale), followed by some small bars in Shibuya and then probably on to Golden Gai in Shinjuku for a final nightcap.

Q: How did you get involved in art? What drew you to a career as a curator and museum director?

A: When I was a kid, I wanted to be a theater director but when I left school, I worked in a theater for a while and realized that it was not my future. Then, while I was an undergraduate at Durham University, I started making art exhibitions as a way of understanding why the world is as it is and how different kinds of power affect people in different ways. The first series of exhibitions I made when I was twenty years old, which also included programs of film, music and theater, was called "Germany in Ferment. Art and Society 1900-1933." I wanted to find out why bad dictators were afraid of good art and what power art had in the face of tyranny. I'm still finding out.

Q: How does your experience of living and working in different parts of the world play into your curatorial choices?

A: Working and living in different cultures helps you to understand that there are always many different and equally valid perspectives on any issue—something I was beginning to understand even before I left the UK.

Q: Why is contemporary art important?

A: Contemporary art touches on all aspects of life—dreams, thoughts, emotions and reality—and attempts to bring them together in aesthetic form. The distillation or resolution of these elements in art of high quality provides a unique experience, rivalled for me only by a contemplation of the

beauty and power of nature. Art, if it is any good, also enshrines values of freedom which are always being threatened. The freedom of art to be itself is a metaphor for broader political and social freedoms. History has shown us that they are connected.

Q: What are some of your favorite places in the world?

A: India and Nepal, Japan, Hong Kong, the Yorkshire Pennines.

Q: If you had to choose a favorite hotel anywhere in the world, which would it be?

A: The Mao Suite in the Red Capital Hotel in Beijing. This was Mao's secret hutong hideaway, virtually unchanged with even the same furniture and bed. The "cocktail bar" is down steep narrow steps in the nuclear bunker under the courtyard.

Q: What do you like to do when you travel for leisure?

A: Walk, read, look at art, architecture, rocks and water.

Q: Do you collect anything?

A: As I work in the public sphere, it would be a conflict of interest for me to collect contemporary art. On the rare occasions I have spare cash I spend it on Japanese prints, small Asian bronzes, traditional Tibetan or Mongolian paintings, and books.

Q: What's your most prized possession?

A: An 18th-century Mongolian Tanka of Yama, the terrifying lord of destruction and creation, and a small 11th-century Cham bronze of the Hindu God, Ganesha.

Q: What are you reading right now?

A: Thomas Pynchon's "Gravity's Rainbow."

<http://www.artisansofleisuretraveler.com/blog/2009/05/a-conversation-with-renowned-art-curator-david-elliott.php>

David Elliott, the director of the new Moderna Museet in Stockholm, talks to Andreas Gedin, artist and editor, about art, sponsors, politics and Wounds.

by [ANDREAS GEDIN](#), M - Moderna Museets Vänners tidskrift nr 4/97 & 1/98

Andreas Gedin: You became director of the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford quite young and stayed for many years. This must have allowed you not only to control the exhibitions but also the activities in the museum as a whole. Now, Moderna Museet is larger, and you will have to delegate a lot of the work. What does this mean concerning exhibitions?

David Elliott: Do you mean that I did not delegate in Oxford! I had a staff of over thirty people there and there was no way, when producing between twelve and twenty shows a year, that I could do everything on exhibitions myself. But I do feel strongly that the Director of a museum should lead from the front – by example – not from behind. It is true that Moderna Museet is larger than Oxford and has operated within a more bureaucratic climate and this is necessary, to an extent, as MM is a national institution rather than an independent Museum. My job is to introduce the flexibility and rapid response of the independent sector into

the bureaucracy – much of which of course is necessary. Like Candide I want »the best of all possible worlds« and in this case do not see why I should not be able to achieve this.

"But I do feel strongly that the Director of a museum should lead from the front – by example – not from behind."

AG: Which part of them do you plan to curate yourself, and which part will be exhibitions curated elsewhere or by the curators at the Museum?

DE: I intend to shape the ways in which the collections are displayed and to offer different options and approaches over a period of time. I am also very concerned about the way our work is mediated to the public both through the Education programmes and more generally through other media. I will very much be involved in planning the exhibitions, film, video and events programmes and some of these I will directly organise myself or at least head the team which is working on these projects. As there are so many different demands on my time it is very unlikely that I would be able to see a large exhibition through from beginning to end by myself. In the case of large projects it is often better to work in a small team with clear direction. So, with the inaugural exhibition Wounds: from democracy to redemption in contemporary art, Pier Luigi Tazzi has been the guest co-curator and I have found this a very good and stimulating way of working – I hope that he feels the same way – and we have planned the exhibition on an equal basis, each of us bring our own particular interests, specialisms and skills to the project. After the Wall will take place in autumn 1999 to celebrate the emergence of a new generation of artists in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and former Yugoslavia in the decade since perestroika and the fall of the Berlin Wall. The chief guest curator of this is Bojana Pejic' and Maria Lind, one of the new curators at the Museum, will also be closely involved. On top of this we have an advisory board spread across many of the countries involved and I will act as a kind of Godfather to the project and be co-editor of the catalogue. And then, of course, the Museum's curators are developing exhibition projects which they will organise themselves: Leif Wigh is working on a Oskar Gustave Rejlander exhibition, Cecilia Widenheim on an Ulrik Samuelson one man show and on a project devoted to the development of Modernism in Sweden, Maria Lind is looking at the development of a project room and so on.

AG: One of your specialities is, I believe, art from Russia, or the former Soviet Union? Do you yet have any plans to manifest this in a future show?

DE: Yes. It will figure in After the Wall. Also we have recently bought for the photographic library an almost complete run of the seminal photographic magazine USSR in Construction (1931–1941) which was designed by all the best avant-garde typographers, as well as vintage prints of photographs by El Lisitsky and Gustav Klucis. I was amazed that Russian/Soviet photography was hardly represented in the collections and felt that this should be rectified (German photography of the 1930s and 1940s is much better represented). Also there is hardly any work by the incredibly creative Baltic photographers who have flourished from the early 1960s through to the present. It is vital that we make an exhibition of this work and also add significant items to our collection. Lastly we are planning to take the Alexander Rodchenko show from New York MOMA at the beginning of 1999 – that is if we can find a sponsor for the show! The last large Rodchenko show was in 1979 at the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford.

"Let's say that I am a very bad joiner of groups and organisations and was not at all a supporter of Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s."

AG: Does your interest in Soviet art have its origins in you being a Marxist in the seventies? (Weren't you?)

DE: No. Some people perhaps thought I was a Marxist because I have always insisted that art is inextricably linked to its own times and circumstances, and that economic factors can play a part in this which is not to say that art cannot be timeless as well. I have also worked intensively on the different manifestations of art at times of revolutionary acute social stress and have been fascinated by the relationship between modern art (and artists) to ideology. This was a project on which I was working on and off for 25 years between my first exhibition Germany in Ferment: art and society in Germany 1900–1932 which took place in 1970 and the large Council of Europe exhibition Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930–1940 which was shown in London in 1995. You seem to be interested in my politics which I think are my own private affair. Let's say that I am a very bad joiner of groups and organisations and was not at all a supporter of Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s.

AG: Is Wounds an exhibition which deals with moral issues instead of politics and that the idea of morality here includes politics among other things and therefore fits better into the world of the late nineties? Or is Wounds more about aesthetics?

DE: Wounds deals with the idea of modern art being an ethical or moral field – almost to the extent of it being an ideology in itself which has superseded the crude dialectics of right and left. The field of aesthetics as defined by Kant is moral in its origin and I think has continued to be so to the present. This is one of the points that Wounds makes rather strongly.

AG: When you, together with Pier Luigi Tazzi, choose to curate a show with as many artists as seventy, the main statement is put forward by you, the curators, and not by the artists. On the other hand, you have created a context in which the artist is regarded as capable of dealing with complex, intellectual issues, and not as lovable savages, which often is the case. This reminds me a bit of Documenta. Do you feel close to the way Catherine David curated Documenta X?

DE: Not really because I feel that the underlying ideology of the last Documenta was a sixties French version of discourse and dialectic which, I feel, simplifies and brings everything down to the same level. One felt almost that media (discourse) were more important than art and while you can't really separate them, neither should you confuse them. That said, she did make some very interesting statements about the ideology of urban and architectural spaces as both utopias and dystopias.

AG: The art world must be one of the toughest areas of market economy. The competition is very hard, art works by the »stars« are handled like stocks on the stock market, there is no »social security«, no pensions, etc. Do you agree upon this view?

DE: Life is hard.

AG: Though a museum is not commercial, it is a part of the game: what do you think the role for museums is in this hard world?

DE: Museums must use what power they have responsibly and independently and should not be led by the market. Ideally they should anticipate it and they should have or develop the intellectual, human and research sources to do this.

"I have no doubt that sponsorship is going to become increasingly important to the Museum and we must be very clear about what it is we are offering."

AG: What do you think about relations to the sponsors? How dependent will you be on them? What are they allowed to do, and what not? Or, to put it in another way: what are they buying, and what is Moderna Museet selling?

DE: We want to continue good long-term relationships with a number of sponsors at different levels and they have to be the right kind of sponsor – organisations that reflect well on the Museum. I have no doubt that sponsorship is going to become increasingly important to the Museum and we must be very clear about what it is we are offering. Firms would want to be associated with our good reputation and standing, as well as with our international contacts and reputation for forward thinking and innovation. We also offer publicity and opportunities for entertaining and education in exclusive surroundings.

AG: There will be large exhibitions but also spaces for smaller projects. What will it look like? Will there be any room for improvisations?

DE: There will be a project room in one of the studios opposite the entrance to the Museum as well as accommodation and space for an artist in residence. It's much rougher space than the interior of the Museum and also more flexible in its programming.

AG: Even if there are going to be fantastic exhibitions, a museum is a social institution which also needs to be a place for other social activities to stay alive. This means everything from having a coffee or buying a magazine to watching a performance or listen to a concert. Which are the plans for this kind of activities?

DE: I agree. There will be a fantastic book shop, an excellent restaurant and cafe, a small studio cinema, a library, workshops and education rooms, video viewing facilities, possibilities for consulting the photography and prints and drawings reserve collections and a large auditorium for lectures, symposium, film shows and performances. That is not even mentioning the temporary exhibitions and permanent collections! On top of that the island of Skeppsholmen is itself virtually an outdoor sculpture park and some works will be resited and added to this.

AG: Only one of the curators, Maria Lind, is specialised in Swedish contemporary art. Is she the one who is supposed to take care of the relation to the Swedish contemporary art scene?

DE: No. Curators work in a team and although they have specialisms their influence and interest is not confined to these areas.

"Every exhibition I make is a dream exhibition."

AG: The Museum could be of great importance for the Swedish art scene. It has developed, well, during the nineties without any strong relation to any institution, but I think that there now is a longing for a stronger relation to the Museum. There are expectations not only on exhibitions with Swedish artists involved but also on an atmosphere where the Museum is a part of Swedish art life, that you invite us, so to speak. Do you agree upon this view? And if you do, have you planned for this?

DE: Yes.

AG: Will I be able to make an interview with you in Swedish in the end of next year?

DE: Probably. I intend to do one hour a day study of Swedish once the Museum is open. I then intend to learn Tibetan.

AG: Do you have any »dream exhibition«, the one you would curate if you had all the money needed?

DE: Every exhibition I make is a dream exhibition. If it was not I would not do it. I dream different things every night and work in the real world. This is not a compromise, it's purely a professional way of working.~

http://www.artnode.se/artorbit/issue1/i_elliott/i_elliott.html

Other sites referencing David Elliott

<http://www.biennaleofsydney.com.au/BlogRetrieve.aspx?BlogID=419&PostID=34906>

<http://www.focusdep.com/quotes/professions/Curator>