

**FOR
IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**



**MONTIEN BOONMA
HOUSE OF HOPE
OCTOBER 4-25, 1997**

Deitch Projects is pleased to present House of Hope, an installation by the Thai artist Montien Boonma. The artist has transformed the gallery into a temple-like space. The air is infused with the scent of the eighteen medicinal herbs with which the artist has painted the gallery walls. The "House of Hope", which hovers in the center of the gallery space, is constructed from 1,648 strands of hanging herbal beads, spilling onto a stair-like stack of 440 wooden stools. The suspended "house" has a floating dreamlike quality that invites spiritual engagement. The stack of stools, painted with a red herb that symbolizes heaven, in Thai culture are like a "stairway to heaven." The 500,000 beads which fall from the ceiling are described by the artist as a "black rain" bringing hope.

The House of Hope is the artist's expression of a hope for a cure for some of the ills of modern society through a return to traditional spiritual values, traditional natural medicine and traditional community involvement. The artist has been very affected by the way Thailand is suffering from an epidemic of HIV infection and from diseases that seem to have been caused by environmental pollution. Recently, Thailand has experienced uncontrolled industrial development and social dislocations that have disrupted the structure of its society and its environment. The House of Hope offers a symbolic path toward a more healthy and more spiritual life.

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