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# **MICHEL GONDRY**

## **THE SCIENCE OF SLEEP**

### **AN EXHIBITION OF SCULPTURE AND CREEPY PATHOLOGICAL LITTLE GIFTS**

**September 6 - 30, 2006**  
**76 Grand Street**

Deitch Projects is pleased to present *The Science of Sleep*; an exhibition of sculpture and creepy pathological little gifts by Michel Gondry coinciding with the release of his new movie *The Science of Sleep*. Though he first rose to acclaim as a director of award-winning music videos and feature films, Gondry is also an immensely imaginative artist. In this exhibition, *The Science of Sleep* movie sets are presented and elaborated on as to allow their more concerted consideration as sculpture. A walk through the exhibition will immerse the viewer in the sculptural experience of the movie in three dimensions.

Concocting immersive hyperreal environments, hybrid beings, and somnambulatory action, Michel Gondry often surprises even himself with his own extraordinary ideas. Not one to limit himself to a single creative outlet, Gondry embraces each endeavor with the same total vision. In this project, Gondry seeks to recreate in a fine art context the experience of his movie phenomenologically. Instead of following on-screen action, we can instead literally traverse the story-scapes ourselves and see what subjective experience it inspires.

Moving through the multiple worlds created in 76 Grand Street, viewers will be able to traverse recreations of the movie sets themselves and the sculptures that furnished them. Elements from the film recreated here include a bedroom, office, TV station, cave, and creepy little gift room. This pink heart-like room will contain the unique “gifts” that Gondry makes for those he admires, like the gifts the protagonist, Stephane, makes for Stephanie in the movie. The more Stephane confuses his dreams with reality, the more the viewer will have to disentangle their experience of the motion picture with that of being WITHIN the motion picture.

The film, *The Science of Sleep*, world-premiered at the Sundance Film Festival earlier this year. It stars Gael Garcia Bernal in a sentimental, surreal comedy about a daydreamer (Bernal) who falls in love with his lovely neighbor (Charlotte Gainsbourg) and starts to get lost between his dreams and reality. Gondry says the main character is a sort of alter ego for him, where his gifts for four women, some of whom were working on the film, are intimately linked to the filmic gifts. Stephanie is a composite of Gondry’s real-life female inspirations, (photographed

here by Autumn de Wilde) to whom he created real life gifts-- one of which being the movie itself. These pathological, compulsive little gifts are a vehicle for examining Gondry's interest in how people express their love through creativity and how they express their creativity through their love. In Gondry's own words: "These 'little gifts' are made for persons very special to me. They signify a unique space that only that person and I share. It's an object that would mean nothing to anyone else. They are built from the overwhelming anticipation of the moment they will be discovered by whom they are addressed to. The movie goes in many directions, though they all go back to love, he says. It is not necessarily a love that leads to happiness.

Gondry got his start while studying graphics at a French art school when he began directing videos

for the band of which he was a member. In 1993 these early videos attracted the attention of Bjork, thus initiating one of his longest and most successful professional creative relationships. Their first collaboration, the video for "Human Behavior," won practically every existing music video award. Gondry went on to direct many other Bjork videos and also videos for The White Stripes, The Rolling Stones, Beck, Kylie Minogue, The Chemical Brothers, and Daft Punk. In 2003 he released *The Work of Director Michel Gondry*, a DVD collection of these projects, to much acclaim. He received a 2005 Academy Award for his original screenplay for *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, and his commercials have won many awards including the Lion D'Or at Cannes. Gondry currently resides in New York with his son.

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