Internationally Renowned Product Designer to Speak in Chicago March 15

Chicago, IL—Product designer and conceptual artist Jerszy Seymour, founder of the Berlin-based Jerszy Seymour Design Workshop and recipient of the 2000 Dedalus Award for European Design, will deliver a lecture at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) on Thursday, March 15, 2012, at 6 p.m. The event is free and open to the public, and will be presented at the SAIC Columbus Auditorium, 280 South Columbus Drive. Seating is limited and available on a first come, first served basis. Doors open at 5:45 p.m. For more information, call 312.629.6650 or e-mail aiado@saic.edu.

Jerszy Seymour will use examples of his design work and conceptual practice to discuss life situations, notions of autonomy and collectivity, the possibility of an amateur society, and what a “dirty art” could be. This is a reference to “The Dirty Art Department,” the new Applied Art and Design Masters program founded by Seymour and offered at the Sandberg Institute (Amsterdam). The Dirty Art Department calls itself an open space for all possible thought, creation and action, and welcomes students from all backgrounds—designers to bankers, philosophers to farmers, and especially the curious—to navigate relationships between the built world and the natural world, between the individual and the collective. Seymour’s talk itself will navigate this terrain, starting as a lecture and evolving into a performance manifesto entitled “A General Theory of Design.”

This presentation is sponsored by SAIC’s William H. Bronson & Grayce Slovet Mitchell Lecture Series.

Jerszy Seymour was born in Berlin in 1968. He grew up in London where he studied engineering at South Bank Polytechnic (1987-1990) and industrial design at the Royal College of Art (1991-1993). Shortly afterwards, he moved to Milan to begin his experimental projects including 'House in a Box' and 'Scum.' In 2004 he returned to Berlin and formed the Jerszy Seymour Design Workshop, beginning projects that sought to revitalize the position of design within society, including: 'Brussels Brain,' a symposium center for Design Brussels to discuss the future of design (2005); 'Living Systems' at the Vitra Design Museum to investigate the individual economy (2007); 'The First Supper' at the MAK in Vienna to propose the possibility of an “amateur” society (2008). Parallel to his conceptual practice, Seymour has designed products and strategies for Magis, Vitra, Alessi, Hermès, Moulinex, SFR, Swatch, Smeg, Evian, and IDEE. He received the 2000 Dedalus Award for European Designer of the Year and the Taro Okamoto Memorial Award for Contemporary Art (2003). In addition to teaching at the Sandberg Institute, Seymour gives workshops at the Royal College of Art in London, the Domus Academy in Milan, and other institutions across Europe.

Recent SAIC Faculty Accomplishments

The School of Constructed Environments at Parsons The New School For Design has awarded SAIC Assistant Professor Tristan d’Estrée Sterk (AIADO, SAIC MFA 2004) the 2012 Kalil Endowment project grant for a practitioner/scholar. Sterk, who is the founder of the Office for Robotic Architectural Media & Bureau for Responsive Architecture (ORAMBRA), was also recently selected as AIA Chicago’s Dubin Family Young Architect of the Year.
Several outstanding SAIC community members have been awarded unrestricted $20,000 grants from the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation. They are Anna Shhteynshleyger (Photo), William J O’Brien (MFA 2005, Ceramics), Josh Faught (MFA 2006), David Hartt (MFA 1994, Photography), Lauren Kelly (MFA 2009), and Dianna Molzan (BFA 2001). According to Gallerist NY, the winners were picked by a jury made up of Carnegie Museum Associate Curator Dan Byers, Los Angeles County Museum of Art Curator Christine Y. Kim, artist Kerry James Marshall, critic John Perreault, Whitney Museum Curator Scott Rothkopf, Artist Cindy Sherman, and American Craft Museum Director Emeritus Paul Smith.

Faculty member Peter Exley, FAIA (AIADO) and SAIC alumna Sharon Exley (MA 2001, BFA 1983) of the Chicago design studio Architecture Is Fun have been named the Benjamin Moore HUE® Award Winners for Contract Interiors. They will receive the award at the HUE ceremony on Tuesday, April 3 in New York City at the Hearst Tower. According to a press release, Architecture Is Fun is an "18-year old practice dedicated to architecture and experience-based interiors for play and learning... The duo's award-winning portfolio includes a compelling and visually dazzling series of museum, church, library, public spaces, and educational projects across the county and in South America."

"The definition of eclectic—never repetitive yet, as a whole, everything made sense," summarizes the Women's Wear Daily (circ. 56,562) review of faculty member Shane Gabier's (Fashion, SAIC 1995-98) and fellow alumnus Christopher Peters' (BFA 2010) Creatures of the Wind Fall 2012 runway show at New York Fashion Week on February 9. The review, which called the collection a "combination of offbeat whimsy and fine-tuned chic," was part of an energetic outpouring of coverage by the fashion industry’s most renowned publications. New York Times fashion blog On the Runway posted a slideshow with 22 looks alongside its commentary on a standing-room-only crowd; T Magazine (circ. 1,700,000) focused on the show's captivating finale—a "collection-defining" tiered dress for which they used 25 yards of mint chiffon; ELLE (circ. 1,145,464) also praised the designers' first foray into evening wear; Vogue (circ. 1,264,034) enthusiastically commended the designers for being the "mood-brightening spots on New York’s fashion calendar;" Style.com applauded their “unique, offbeat vision.” London's influential style magazine Dazed and Confused (circ. 60,000) and Harper's Bazaar (circ. 714,249) also featured coverage of the show.

About the School of the Art Institute of Chicago
A leader in educating artists, designers, and scholars since 1866, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) offers nationally accredited undergraduate, graduate, and post-baccalaureate programs to nearly 3,200 students from around the globe. Located in the heart of Chicago, SAIC has an educational philosophy built upon an interdisciplinary approach to art and design, giving students unparalleled opportunities to develop their creative and critical abilities, while working with renowned faculty who include many of the leading practitioners in their fields. SAIC’s resources include the Art Institute of Chicago and its new Modern Wing; numerous special collections and programming venues provide students with exceptional exhibitions, screenings, lectures, and performances. For more information, please visit saic.edu.