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FALL 2014 INTERSECTIONS PROJECT

**The Phillips Collection presents *NO/Escape*,
Bernardi Roig's sculptural works addressing existential dualities.**

Washington, DC—Mounting six sculptural works in unexpected interior and exterior spaces, Bernardi Roig challenges visitors perception and experience in *NO/Escape*, on view beginning October 24. His project addresses the existential dualities of entrapment and liberation, blinding and illumination, absence and presence. *NO/Escape* is part of the Phillips's ongoing Intersections series that highlights contemporary art and artists in conversation with the museum's permanent collection, history, and architecture.

In his project, Roig (b. 1965, Mallorca, Spain) draws parallels between his works and Honoré Daumier's lithographs from the mid-19th century, both of which offer poignant social commentary. His work expresses the anxiety, desperation, and loss of individuality in contemporary society, one that he sees as overrun by mass-produced, widely available imagery.

"Today we are living in an atmosphere saturated with images, but the experience that they produce has a low intensity," the artist says. "Now it is ever more difficult to give meaning to an image. We are subjected to light, a light that dissolves the outlines of things, a white light within which everything fluctuates."



Bernardi Roig, *Acetón*, 2005. Polyester resin, marble dust and fluorescent lights, figure life size. Courtesy Max Estrella Gallery, Madrid, Spain

Typical of the artist's work are the cruel-looking white plaster figures cast from real people, often cornered or crushed against walls or twisting in pain. By including the element of light—whether a single light bulb, neon tubes, or dozens of cascading fluorescent lights—his work blends minimalist forms with highly charged expressions of anxiety and loneliness. For Roig, his figures' passive acceptance of the fluorescent light becomes a metaphor for the blinding, confining effect of overstimulation. These figures, including *The Man of the Light* (2005) and *Herr Mauroner* (2008), strategically placed in and around the museum, invite a dialogue on the multiple identities of the contemporary man.

In addition to the preexisting figurative sculptures, Roig created *White Cage* specifically for the Phillips, for the corner of 21st and Q Streets. With its bent bars and single hanging neon light, the cage functions as a place of emptiness—recalling Harry Houdini's early 20th century sensational escape acts—and provoking viewers to think about imprisonment and escape.

NO/Escape is on view Oct. 24, 2014–Feb. 15, 2015.

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INTERSECTIONS CONTEMPORARY ART PROJECTS

Inaugurated in 2009, Intersections is a series of contemporary art projects that explores—as the title suggests—the intriguing intersections between old and new traditions, modern and contemporary art practices, and museum spaces and artistic interventions. Whether engaging with the permanent collection or diverse spaces in the museum, the projects suggest new relationships with their own surprises. Previous Intersections artists include Jeanne Silverthorne (2013), Xavier Veilhan (2012), A. Balasubramaniam (2011), Jae Ko (2010), Linn Myers (2010), and Jennifer Wen Ma (2009).

ABOUT THE PHILLIPS COLLECTION

The Phillips Collection is one of the world's most distinguished collections of Impressionist and Modern American and European art. Stressing the continuity between art of the past and present, it offers a strikingly original and experimental approach to Modern art by combining works of different nationalities and periods in displays that change frequently. The setting is similarly unconventional, featuring small rooms, a domestic scale, and a personal atmosphere. Artists represented in the collection include Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Vincent van Gogh, Edgar Degas, Henri Matisse, Pierre Bonnard, Paul Cézanne, Pablo Picasso, Paul Klee, Claude Monet, Honoré Daumier, Georgia O'Keeffe, Arthur Dove, Mark Rothko, Milton Avery, Jacob Lawrence, and Richard Diebenkorn, among others. The Phillips Collection, America's first museum of modern art, has an active collecting program and regularly organizes acclaimed special exhibitions, many of which travel internationally. The Intersections series features projects by contemporary artists, responding to art and spaces in the museum. The Phillips also produces award-winning education programs for K–12 teachers and students, as well as for adults. The museum's Center for the Study of Modern Art explores new ways of thinking about art and the nature of creativity, through artist visits and lectures, and provides a forum for scholars through courses, postdoctoral fellowships, and internships. Since 1941, the museum has hosted Sunday Concerts in its wood-paneled Music Room. The Phillips Collection is a private, non-government museum, supported primarily by donations.

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