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ENTERTAINMENT

Devo's Mark Mothersbaugh to curate at Denver's Clyfford Still Museum

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1 COMMENT



Artist and musician Mark Mothersbaugh is photographed in front of what he calls an untitled coagulation of rugs and video exhibit that is part of his show called Myopia at The Museum of Contemporary Art Denver (MCA Denver), in Denver, CO on October 22, 2014. (Helen H. Richardson, The Denver Post)

Mark Mothersbaugh, founder of the pop band Devo and the star of a current retrospective at the **Museum of Contemporary Art Denver**, will next curate an exhibit at another local institution, the **Clyfford Still Museum**.

The exhibit will open March 6 and run through May 3, overlapping with the MCA show, which closes April 12.

The effort is an experiment, of sorts, for the Still. Mothersbaugh will be the first artist to assemble a show at the museum, which opened in 2011. Still director **Dean Sobel** said Thursday that he doesn't yet know what the exhibit will look like.



The Clyfford Still Museum in Denver on Tuesday morning, Oct. 30, 2012. (Kathryn Scott Osler, Denver Post file photo)

"We have given him free reign as a curator," said Sobel. "We want to be as open and unrestrictive as possible in terms of how he might approach this."

Mothersbaugh, who is spending time at the Still this week honing his ideas, is relatively new to the fine arts world. His band Devo is an icon of post-punk rock that made its first album in 1977. The group is known for songs like "Whip it" and "Mongoloid," and for dressing in outrageous costumes, such as yellow hazmat suits, for its concerts and videos.

Mothersbaugh has made art as well as music since his teens, producing an endlessly interesting array of drawings, movies, musical instruments, photographs and sculptures that now fill three floors at the MCA. It is his first significant show at a major museum.

At the Still, he'll be limited in terms of materials. The museum, through its charter, can only show works by Still. That leaves Mothersbaugh to play with a city-owned collection of paintings, drawings and photos attributed to the artist.

Until now, the Still's display approach has been conservative, mostly straightforward shows, arranged around various themes, that have centered around Clyfford Still's right-angled abstract expressionist works set on white walls.

This curator can add his own vision to that, and that opens the door to plenty. Mothersbaugh has devoted his life — sometimes seriously, sometimes with irony — to expressing his theory of "de-evolution," that world culture is going backwards now.

"Graphics, sound, color, music, there are lots of possibilities for this exhibit," said Sobel.

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