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MoCP

Museum of
Contemporary Photography

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COCO FUSCO'S OPERATION ATROPOS

Saturday, November 18, 2006, 7pm

Ferguson Theatre, 600 S. Michigan Ave.

Film screening and discussion: director Coco Fusco in person!

Intrigued by the role of women as "not victims, but victimizers" in the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal, multimedia artist Coco Fusco decided to learn about interrogation techniques herself. In July 2005, Fusco took a course designed for civilians who want to learn techniques for extracting information (or resisting interrogation themselves) led by Team Delta, a group of former US military interrogators. She took a group of six women with her and filmed the workshop, which we see unfold in *Operation Atropos* (2006, 59 min.), a verité study of prisoner experience as well as an investigation of the role of gender in the psychological interplay between interrogator and prisoner.

Team Delta's course required Fusco and her team to take part in an immersive simulation of being prisoners of war: they were ambushed, captured, strip-searched, jailed, subjected to humiliation, and interrogated repeatedly. Although all participants in the project are aware that capture and interrogation is a simulation, the atmosphere of the exercise becomes increasingly intense, especially when some of the women are led to believe that a member of their group is being hurt. Afterwards, the participants were taught how to inflict on others what had been done to them.

The New York Times called *Operation Atropos* "art for a time when play-acting and politics seem to be all but indistinguishable...reality television with the cracks between reality and artifice showing."

Fusco will introduce the film and answer questions from the audience afterward. Arrive early and view the exhibitions *An-My Lê: Small Wars* and *29 Palms* and *War Fare*. The museum will extend its hours until 9:00 pm.

ABOUT MOCP: The Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP), a resident organization of Columbia College Chicago, is the only museum in the Midwest with an exclusive commitment to the medium of photography. By presenting projects and exhibitions that embrace a wide range of contemporary aesthetics and technologies, the Museum strives to communicate the value and significance of photographic images as expressions of human thought, imagination, and creativity. The Museum of Contemporary Photography is free and open to the public weekdays from 10am until 5pm (Thursdays until 8 pm) and Saturdays from noon until 5 pm. The Museum is located at 600 S. Michigan Avenue on the corner of Harrison Street. For additional information, please call 312-663-5554 or visit us at www.mocp.org.

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Image:
Still from *Operation Atropos* (2006, digital video, 59 min).
Courtesy of the artist

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