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Brent Green: still from *Gravity Was Everywhere Back Then*, 2010; 16mm film and digital photographs transferred to digital video; color, sound. Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York.

**UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive
Presents**

Brent Green: Perpetual and furious refrain
MATRIX 232
May 2–September 12, 2010

Features West Coast premiere of the celebrated sculptor and filmmaker's first feature-length film.

Berkeley, CA, April 6, 2010 — The University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA) is privileged to present **Brent Green: Perpetual and furious refrain**. The exhibition includes the West Coast premiere

of artist, animator, and filmmaker Green's first full-length film *Gravity Was Everywhere Back Then* and an installation featuring vignettes from the film and several of his handmade kinetic sculptures. A not-to-be-missed live cinema event featuring Green's animated short films with live narration and improvised soundtracks by an ensemble which includes Green, Brendan Canty of Fugazi, and Donna K opens the exhibition on May 2. **Brent Green: Perpetual and furious refrain** is curated by Phyllis Wattis MATRIX Curator Elizabeth Thomas, and runs through September 12, 2010.

One of the most interesting young filmmakers and artists today, Green has a keen interest in movement, both as an animator moving images and objects frame by frame to build narrative films, and in his kinetic sculptures that produce sound and lo-fi animation effects. This fixation is also conveyed emotionally through his films—gothic fables woven from curious biographical details that often reveal fascinations with death and spirituality, love and obsession. Nowhere are all of these motifs explored more intensely in his work than with *Gravity Was Everywhere Back Then*.

Gravity chronicles the real life story of Leonard Wood, an eccentric Louisville hardware clerk who, upon learning of his wife Mary's cancer diagnosis, began a decades-long project of building their home into a "healing machine." Long after Mary's death, Wood continued to refashion and build onto this sprawling, chaotic maze of rooms, both as a way to cope with his heartbreak and to memorialize her. Where some rooms towered in height, the floors of others began halfway up adjacent doorways. Stairways were numbered and each windowpane was painted in a different color. Green notes about Wood's project, "It's physically trying to create a miracle, like praying, or Noah building an ark." Wood was finally forced to sell the property to cover his own medical bills.

To make the film, Green painstakingly recreated not one, but five full-scale versions of the Wood home, plus an eighteen-foot balsa wood moon and

constellation of stars that glow above the makeshift town that sits on the Pennsylvania farm where Green lives. The film is Green's first attempt using speaking actors and utilizes the frame-by-frame stop-motion animation techniques he has developed over the course of several much-lauded animated short films. The film will have its West Coast premiere at the PFA Theater on June 16.

The BAM/PFA gallery installation highlights Green's other obsessions— invention and music—which also figure prominently in the Wood saga. Displaying his handmade kinetic sculptures that produce what he calls “effects of wonder,” the most prominent piece is a monolithic 13-voice sound machine based on Thomas Edison's early wax cylinder recorders. This piece is flanked by a series of smaller animation machines crafted from sewing trestles and accordions, each of which were created to extend the Wood narrative beyond celluloid. Excerpts from *Gravity* will also be on display in the gallery space.

Green was born in 1978 and lives and works in a barn in Cressona, Pennsylvania. A self-taught artist, his work has been a regular feature at Sundance, and received acclaim at the Hammer Museum, Wexner Center for the Arts, Walker Art Center, and Getty Museum of Art. *Gravity* premieres at the IFC Center in New York on May 7, 2010; upcoming screenings and exhibitions in 2010 include MoMA, New York; SITE Santa Fe Biennial; DiverseWorks, Houston; and Arizona State University Art Museum. Brent Green is a 2005 Creative Capital grant recipient. He was named as one of “25 New Faces of Independent Film” for 2005 by *Filmmaker Magazine*.

Public Programs

Opening Reception

Sunday, May 2, 5 p.m.

Bancroft Lobby

Performance

Sunday, May 2, 6 p.m.

Museum Theater

Brent Green performs with Brendan Canty of Fugazi and Donna K. The program includes animated short films with live narration and improvised soundtracks.

Film Premiere

Gravity Was Everywhere Back Then

Wednesday, June 16, 7:30 p.m.

PFA Theater

Brent Green in person

Credits

The MATRIX Program at the UC Berkeley Art Museum is made possible by a generous endowment gift from Phyllis C. Wattis; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; and the continued support of the BAM/PFA Trustees.

For more information about the exhibition and special programs visit:

<http://bampfa.berkeley.edu/exhibition/232>

About BAM/PFA

The Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA) is the visual arts center of the University of California, Berkeley, one of the nation's leading research universities. BAM/PFA aims to inspire the imagination and ignite critical dialogue through contemporary and historical art and film, engaging audiences from the campus, Bay Area community, and beyond. One of the largest university art museums in the United States in both size and attendance, BAM/PFA presents fifteen art exhibitions and five hundred film programs each year. The museum's collection of more than 15,000 works, distinguished by artistic excellence and innovation, intellectual exploration, and social commentary, includes exceptional examples of mid-twentieth-century painting,

including important works by Hans Hofmann, Jackson Pollock, Eva Hesse, and Mark Rothko, as well as historical and contemporary Asian art, early American painting, Conceptual and contemporary international art, and California and Bay Area art. The PFA film and video collection now includes the largest group of Japanese films outside of Japan, as well as impressive holdings of Soviet silents, West Coast avant-garde cinema, seminal video art, rare animation, Central Asian productions, Eastern European cinema, and international classics.

Museum Information

Location: 2626 Bancroft Way, just below College Avenue near the UC Berkeley campus.

Gallery and Museum Store Hours: Wednesday through Sunday, 11–5. Open L@TE Fridays until 9 p.m. Closed Monday and Tuesday.

Admission: General admission is \$8; admission for seniors, disabled persons, non-UC Berkeley students, and young adults (13 – 17) is \$5; admission for BAM/PFA members, UC Berkeley students, staff, and faculty, and children under 12 is free. Reservations are required for group visits; for information, rates, and schedule, please e-mail sgvisits@berkeley.edu. Admission is free on the first Thursday of each month.

L@TE Admission: On L@TE Fridays, general admission to the BAM galleries is \$5 after 5 p.m. Show your ticket for a same-day PFA screening or gallery visit and get in free. Admission is always free for BAM/PFA members and UC Berkeley students, faculty, and staff. For updates on L@TE programs and to purchase tickets, visit bampfa.berkeley.edu/late.

Information: 24-hour recorded message (510) 642-0808; fax (510) 642-4889; TDD (510) 642-8734.

Website: bampfa.berkeley.edu

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Please note: For a selection of media images, please contact Peter Cavagnaro at (510) 642-0365 or pcavagnaro@berkeley.edu.