

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Regen Projects
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MATTHEW BARNEY : CREMASTER 5: PHOTOGRAPHS, DRAWINGS, & SCULPTURE

March 7 - April 11, 1998

Gallery hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 11-5 pm

Opening reception: Saturday, March 7, 6:00-8:00 pm

Regen Projects is pleased to present an exhibition of works from **Matthew Barney's** Cremaster 5, the third release (filmed out of sequence) in the epic "Cremaster" series. The exhibition will feature photographs taken as character sketches during the filming of Cremaster 5, as well as drawings and a vitrine/sculpture. **Barney** will also modify the gallery to evoke the particular atmosphere of Cremaster 5.

Barney began the "Cremaster" series in 1994 as a five-part nonsequential series of films. Cremaster refers to the muscle which controls the rising and falling of the testicles in heat or cold. The series is a mythic tale of the conflict of the reproductive system during prenatal development. Each work in the "Cremaster" series is set in a specific location within which **Barney** creates an enveloping world of symbolic ritual and characters that blur the distinction between object, animal, and human forms. Cremaster 4 was filmed on the Isle of Man in the Irish Sea, while Cremaster 1 was filmed in a football stadium in Boise, Idaho. The yet to be released Cremaster 2 and Cremaster 3 will be set at the Columbia Ice Field in Canada and the Chrysler Tower in New York.

Cremaster 5 takes place in Budapest, the birthplace of Harry Houdini, a figure whose performative acts of physical transcendence, is cited as one of **Barney's** inspirations. The film is set within the dramatic architectural monuments of Budapest including the State Opera House, the Lanchid (Chain) Bridge, and the Gellert Thermal Baths.

Amidst such opulent backdrops of Baroque architecture, **Barney** creates lush mise-en-scene portraits of his mythical characters. These large scale color photographs depict **Barney** in his three roles as the melancholy Giant before a curtain of colorful flora, standing gracefully in a Calla lily-like prosthesis with Jacobin pigeons on arm; the Magician shackled in self-lubricating plastic manacles standing in a statuesque gaze, contemplating his fateful leap; and the Diva lying lifeless at the edge of the Opera's stage, his head smashed into a gleaming pool of pink liquid. Other photographs reveal the Queen of Chain caught in dark moments of romantic suffering.

Barney's photographs recall Baroque portraiture, however they are also cinematic, subtly revealing the narrative of the film in a succession of scenes. Roberta Smith writes of Cremaster 5, it is a "feast of ravishing sequences and scenes, tied together by Arthurian themes of love, contest, loss and death, and spiced with frequent references to the history of painting. ...it may take hints from Peter Greenaway, Federico Fellini and Jean Cocteau. But it also antes up Mr. **Barney's** heady mix of hothouse perfectionism, fairy-tale fantasy, endurance-art ritual and decorous gender-bending." (New York Times. November 14, 1997)

A reception for **Matthew Barney** will take place on Saturday, March 7, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at Regen Projects. For further information please contact Stuart Regen or Shaun Caley at the gallery.

In conjunction with **Matthew Barney's** exhibition at Regen Projects, Landmark's Nuart Theatre will host the west coast premiere of the film, Cremaster 5. **Matthew Barney** will be present to introduce Cremaster 5 at the premiere on Friday, March 6 at 7 pm. Cremaster 5 and Cremaster 4

will be screened daily at 7 pm through March 13 and at noon on March 7 and 8 at Landmark's Nuart Theatre located at 11272 Santa Monica Boulevard. For further information please contact the Nuart Theatre at 310.478.6379 or Regen Projects at 310.276.5424.