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MATTHEW BARNEY: *Drawing from Guardian of the Veil*

December 15, 2007 – January 20, 2008

Gallery Hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 10:00 am – 6:00 pm

Opening Reception: Saturday, December 15, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Regen Projects is pleased to announce an exhibition of drawings, photographs along with a video of a live performance by New York based artist **Matthew Barney**. This exhibition will feature drawings from the artist's latest body of work *Guardian of the Veil* and photographs from his earlier work *Cremaster 3*, establishing a point of departure from **Barney's** *Cremaster Cycle*.

Guardian of the Veil is the first in a series of performances **Barney** gave in his studio (Queens, NY) in April 2007 and then repeated in the *Il Tempo del Postino* exhibition in Manchester, England in July 2007. In this performance **Barney** used remnants from the *Cremaster Cycle* (principally *Cremaster 3*) combined with a new narrative based on elements from Norman Mailer's novel, *Ancient Evenings*. The *Cremaster Cycle* examines and follows a developing life from its inception to its inevitable end. In the *Guardian of the Veil* the narrative follows a protagonist who died in a fire and begins his journey through the seven stages of death toward eternal after-life. This examination of eternal life is in opposition to the trajectory of the *Cremaster Cycle* and sets up the conflict presented in *Guardian of the Veil*.

“**Barney's** metamorphic vocabulary – in which intangible ideas acquire palpable form, and the distinction between mind and matter disintegrates – invokes the defining characteristics of literary fantasy. Governed by the oxymoron, a figure of speech that ‘holds together contradictions and sustains them in an impossible unity without progression toward synthesis,’ the fantastic imagines a new kind of reality.”

(Nancy Spector. “Only the Perverse Fantasy Can Still Save Us” in Matthew Barney: *The CREMASTER Cycle*, published by The Guggenheim Museum, New York, 2002, p.23-24)

Drawn on black paper using graphite and petroleum jelly the drawings from *Guardian of the Veil* convey **Barney's** inimitable, almost surrealistic hand. As a vehicle for the narrative, the fantastical and exuberant drawings function as a story-telling device. In one drawing a decorated bull is seen mounting a Chrysler Imperial car buried in an Egyptian pyramid, seemingly its final resting place. Pictorially conflicting imagery of eternal life after death and the creation of life leading to its ultimate demise is apparent and at odds.

Matthew Barney was born in 1967 in San Francisco and studied at Yale University. He has been included in group exhibitions such as Documenta IX in Kassel, Germany and the Whitney Biennials of 1993 and 1995. His solo exhibition *The Cremaster Cycle*, organized by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, traveled to the Museum Ludwig, Cologne and the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. **Barney** has received numerous awards including the Aperto prize at the 1993 Venice Biennale and the Hugo Boss award in 1996, most recently he was the recipient of the Kaiser Ring Award in Goslar, Germany. His *DRAWING RESTRAINT* exhibition is currently on view at the Serpentine Gallery in London where it will travel to the Kunsthalle Vienna in March 2008.

An opening reception for **Matthew Barney** will take place on Saturday, December 15th, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. Showing concurrently at Regen Projects II will be new work by Swiss artist Urs Fisher. For further information please contact Jennifer Loh or Stacy Bengtson at (310) 276-5424.