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**Ericka Beckman**

Switch Center

March 11 - May 13, 2017

Cherry and Martin is proud to present Ericka Beckman's 2002 film, "Switch Center." Shot on location in Budapest, in a former Soviet-era water purification plant, Ericka Beckman's "Switch Center" uses color, sound and movement to examine cultural signs and subjectivity, particularly with regard to labor, leisure and gender.

Physical action and rhythmic sound — beginning with the very first steps of the actors — organizes the action of Beckman's film, "Switch Center." Male workers in primary blue boiler suits turn flywheels, push buttons, and crank open pipes; later, a female protagonist runs to the top of a stairwell, where she throws an arching pile of loose-leaf paper over a red railing.

In over three decades of film-making, Ericka Beckman has developed an idiom that constantly directs the viewer back to the rational language of film (one of several mediums in which she works). In describing her earliest works, Beckman notes her interest at that time in the ideas of French structuralist Alain Robbe-Grillet, who urged authors to divorce their subjects from metaphor, and to sidestep a universe of signification in favor of "a world that is both solid and immediate." "Switch Center" asserts the presence of the film camera itself and the workings of the filmic medium. Camera angle, stop-action animation, and other techniques direct the viewer toward seeing the transmission of the message as integral to the message itself.

As the gendered division of the workers in "Switch Center" attests, Beckman's work also considers the nature of social roles, how we learn them, and how we act them out. Beckman recalls her investigation in the late 70s of the educational theories of figures like Jean Piaget. Piaget considered activities like games, which provide roles for children and a structure in which they can activate and internalize societal mores. Game play has long been a topic of Beckman's work; in "Switch Center" and other films, the actors act as participants in a larger drama, often governed by rules that they discover through the course of the action depicted in the film.

Ericka Beckman's work will be celebrated in a solo exhibition at Vienna's Secession in June of this year. Her work will also be featured in Oracle (April 29 - September 3, 2017) at The Broad in Los Angeles. A traveling solo museum show of Beckman's work recently appeared at Kunsthalle Bern (2013, Bern, Switzerland) and toured to Le Magasin-Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble (2014, Grenoble, France). A monograph on Beckman's work, edited by Lionel Bovier, Fabrice Stroun and Geraldine Tedder, was released by JRP Ringier summer 2016.

Recent solo and group exhibitions include Walker Art Center (Minneapolis, MN); Tate Modern (London, UK); Centre Pompidou (Paris, France); Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte

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Contemporanea (Turin, Italy); and Swiss Institute (New York, NY). Beckman's work has been included in four Whitney Biennials as well as "The Pictures Generation 1974-1984," curated by Douglas Eklund (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2009). Her work is in such collections as Centre Pompidou (Paris, France); Kunsthalle Bern (Bern, Switzerland); Museum of Modern Art (New York, NY); Whitney Museum of American Art (New York, NY); Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, NY); Walker Art Center (Minneapolis, MN); and Wexner Center for the Arts (Columbus, OH). She lives and works in New York.

Philip Martin Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 11am-6pm and by appointment. For further information and images please contact the gallery at +310-559-0100 or [info@philipmartingallery.com](mailto:info@philipmartingallery.com).

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