



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Ericka Beckman, *HIATUS*, 1999.
16mm film transferred to video,
color, sound; 20 minutes. Courtesy
the artist.

HIGH LINE ART PRESENTS

ERICKA BECKMAN *AUGMENTED REALITY AND CINEMA GAMES*

SCREENING ON HIGH LINE CHANNEL 14

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15 – WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2015
DAILY SCREENINGS FROM 4:00 PM UNTIL THE PARK CLOSES

New York, NY (January 5, 2015) – Presented by Friends of the High Line, High Line Art is pleased to announce the screening of selected video works by Ericka Beckman, including *HIATUS* (1999), *Switch Center* (2003), *Frame UP* (2005), and *Tension Building* (2012 – 2014) on High Line Channel 14, a series of outdoor projections of art videos in the semi-enclosed passageway on the High Line at West 14th Street. This program will be on view daily from Thursday, January 15 through Wednesday, March 11, 2015, from 4:00 PM until the park closes.

Ericka Beckman creates films, videos, photographs, and installations that are inspired by game structures rather than linear narratives. The artist approaches images in a unique way that speaks directly to the changing experience of images in the 1980s and 1990s, particularly as found in the development of early forms of virtual reality. Her diverse body of work has been influenced by both the theories of Jean Piaget – the psychologist best known for his theories of cognitive development – and what Vito Acconci, a prominent influence of Beckman’s, once called “the architecture of the self.” Through her interest in games – children’s games, language games, computer games, and otherwise – Beckman foregrounds the ways in which we structure knowledge and how “the virtual” comes to influence and eventually fabricate reality, rather than supplementing it with an imaginary cognitive space.





For the High Line, Beckman presents a suite of four videos, each of which features a prominent architectural element, a relevant theme in the context of the High Line's perpetually evolving surroundings. *HIATUS* (1999) follows a young woman in an immersive online game wherein her virtual alter-ego Wanda confronts the beguiling Wang, a cowboy caricature attempting to conquer her artificial world. *Switch Center* (2003) activates an abandoned water purification plant in Budapest, robust in its Soviet Modernist architecture, whose staged workers, spinning film animation, and music are inspired by Fernand Léger and Dudley Murphy's Dadaist film "Ballet Mécanique" (1923 – 1924). The dual-screen video *Frame UP* (2005) follows a comedic half-pinball, half-croquet game played with two balls careening across the construction site of the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis during its expansion, which was completed in 2005. In the late fall of 2014, Beckman filmed the new finale of *Tension Building* (2012 – 2014) at the 1935 Olympics Stadium in Florence. The High Line screening is the premier of the final film, which features footage of a both live and modeled stadium, animated with stop motion and live action animation

"We are thrilled to be screening a selection of Ericka Beckman's work that highlights her interest in architecture and construction, ideas very familiar to the High Line and its ever-changing neighborhood," says Cecilia Alemani, the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Curator & Director of High Line Art. "Beckman's timely engagement with the depiction of evolving forms of virtual reality alongside her timeless interests in the structure of the human psyche makes her one of the most important artists of her generation."

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Ericka Beckman (b. 1951, New York) lives and works in New York. Recent solo exhibitions include the Los Angeles Filmforum at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2014); Magasin Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble, France (2014); Tate Modern, London (2013); Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland (2013); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2013); and The Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2005). Recent group exhibitions include *The St. Petersburg Paradox* at the Swiss Institute for Contemporary Art, New York (2014); *Rituals of Rented Island: Object Theater, Loft Performance, and the New Psychodrama—Manhattan, 1970 – 1980* at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2014); and *The Pictures Generation 1974 – 1984* at Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2010). Her work has been featured in major international exhibitions including the Shanghai Biennale (2005); and the Whitney Biennial, New York (1991, 1987, 1985, 1983).

ABOUT HIGH LINE ART

Presented by Friends of the High Line, High Line Art commissions and produces public art projects on and around the High Line. Founded in 2009, High Line Art presents a wide array of artwork including site-specific commissions, exhibitions, performances, video programs, and a series of billboard interventions. Curated by Cecilia Alemani, the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Curator & Director of High Line Art, and produced by Friends of the High Line, High Line Art invites artists to think of creative ways to engage with the uniqueness of the architecture, history, and design of the High Line and to foster a productive dialogue with the surrounding neighborhood and urban landscape.

Major support for High Line Art comes from Donald R. Mullen, Jr. and The Brown Foundation, Inc. of Houston, with additional support from Vital Projects Fund, Inc. High Line Art is supported, in part, with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the New York City Council and from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

ABOUT THE HIGH LINE AND FRIENDS OF THE HIGH LINE

The High Line is an elevated freight rail line transformed into a public park on Manhattan's West Side. It is owned by the City of New York, and maintained and operated by Friends of the High Line. Founded in 1999 by community residents, Friends of the High Line fought for the High Line's preservation and transformation at a time when the historic structure was under the threat of demolition. It is now the non-profit conservancy working with the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation to make sure the High Line is maintained as an extraordinary public space for all visitors to enjoy. In addition to overseeing maintenance, operations, and public programming for the park, Friends of the High Line works to raise the essential private funds to support more than 90 percent of the park's annual operating budget, and to advocate for the transformation of the High Line at the Rail Yards, the third and final section of the historic structure, which runs between West 30th and West 34th Streets.

For further information on High Line Art, please visit art.thehighline.org.

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