

For Immediate Release: December 9, 2013

Contact: Morgan Kroll, Manager, Public Relations, 310-443-7016, [mkroll@hammer.ucla.edu](mailto:mkroll@hammer.ucla.edu)

***JG*, a film by Tacita Dean**

**On view at the Hammer Museum December 21, 2013 – January 26, 2014**



Los Angeles—Berlin-based British artist **Tacita Dean**'s latest film, *JG*, is a sequel in technique to *FILM*, Dean's 2011 project for Tate Modern's Turbine Hall. *JG* is inspired by her correspondence with British author J. G. Ballard (1930–2009) regarding connections between his short story "The Voices of Time" (1960) and Robert Smithson's iconic earthwork and film *Spiral Jetty* (both works, 1970). The new work is a 35mm anamorphic film shot on location in the saline landscapes of Utah and central California using Dean's recently developed and patented system of aperture gate masking. *JG* departs from her previous 16mm films in that it marks a return to voiceover and sets out to respond directly to Ballard's challenge—posed to her in a letter written shortly before his death—that she should seek to solve the mysteries of Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* with her film. The connections between Ballard's short story, which ends with its main character building a mandala in a dried saline landscape, and Smithson's earthwork in the Great Salt Lake, are unequivocal. The 26½-minute film is screened continuously in the Hammer's video gallery during regular museum hours. This is Dean's first solo exhibition in Los Angeles and is organized by Hammer curator Ali Subotnick.

Tacita Dean is esteemed for her drawings, photographs, prints, and sound works, as well as her artist's books and texts. She is best known, however, for her films, which she began exhibiting in galleries in the mid-1990s, making her one of the first artists of her generation to dedicate herself to the medium. She is fascinated by the dynamics between the materiality of celluloid and the passage of time, which she employs in the service of narrative, however apparent or oblique, and regardless of her subjects, which include artists, anachronistic architecture and landscape. Characterized by static camera positions, long takes and ambient sound, her films are imbued by an uncanny stillness that elicits meditative forms of attention. Dean's acute regard for light and subtle forms of motion combine to create singular evocations of sensibility and place, the spirit of the moment and the essence of film itself.

Image caption: Tacita Dean. *JG*, 2013. Anamorphic 35mm film, color and black and white, optical sound. 26:30 min. Courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/Paris, and Frith Street Gallery, London. Spoken text taken from J. G. Ballard's "The Voices of Time" (1960), "Prisoner of the Coral Deep" (1964), and "Robert Smithson as Cargo Cultist" (2000) and from his correspondence with Dean, courtesy of the J. G. Ballard Estate; and from Robert Smithson's "The Spiral Jetty" (1972), © Estate of Robert Smithson/VAGA, New York. Used by permission.

Dean's use of aperture gate masking is a labor-intensive process, analogous to a form of stenciling, which allows her to use different shaped masks to expose and re-expose the negative within a single film frame. This requires running the unexposed film through the camera multiple times, giving each frame the capacity to traverse time and location in ways that parallel the effects of Ballard's fiction and Smithson's earthwork and film. Among the masks used in *JG* is one that references the template and sprocket holes of a strip of 35mm Ektachrome slide film. The accidental black of the unexposed outlines of the other masks—a range of abstract and organic forms that suggest mountain horizons, planets, pools, and Smithson's Jetty, appear to be traced by hand. A work that could only be made using 35mm film, *JG* is also about drawing and collage and, as such, strives to return film to the physical, artisanal medium it was at its origin. Made inside the camera entirely while on location, this process serves to restore the spontaneity and invention that distinguished early cinema in comparison to the relative ease and what Dean calls "the end of risk" afforded by digital postproduction.

*JG* was originally commissioned and shown by Arcadia University Art Gallery, Glenside, PA, funded by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, Philadelphia.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

Tacita Dean was born in 1965 in Canterbury, England and lives and works in Berlin. Dean studied art at the Falmouth School of Art in England, the Supreme School of Fine Art in Athens, and the Slade School of Fine Art in London. In 1998 she was nominated for a Turner Prize and was awarded a DAAD scholarship for Berlin, Germany, in 2000. She has received the following prizes: Aachen Art Prize (2002); Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, Italy (2004); the Sixth Benesse Prize at the 51<sup>st</sup> Venice Biennale (2005); the Hugo Boss Prize at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2006); and the Kurt Schwitters Prize (2009). Dean has also participated in the Venice Biennale in 2013, 2005 and 2003 and Documenta 13 (2012). Her work has been shown internationally at such institutions as Tate Modern, London (2011); the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Spain (2010); New Museum, New York (2008); Schaulager, Basel, Switzerland; and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC (2001).

## **ABOUT THE HAMMER MUSEUM**

The Hammer Museum, a public arts unit of the University of California, Los Angeles, is dedicated to exploring the diversity of artistic expression through the ages. Its collections, exhibitions, and programs span the classic to the cutting-edge in art, architecture, and design, recognizing that artists play a crucial role in all aspects of culture and society.

The museum houses the Armand Hammer Collection of Old Master, Impressionist, and Post-Impressionist paintings and the Armand Hammer Daumier and Contemporaries Collection. The Hammer's newest collection, the Hammer Contemporary Collection, is highlighted by works on paper, particularly drawings and photographs from Southern California. The museum also houses the Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, comprising more than 45,000 prints, drawings, photographs, and artists' books from the Renaissance to the present; and oversees the management of the Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden on the UCLA campus.

The Hammer presents major single-artist and thematic exhibitions of historical and contemporary art. It also presents approximately ten Hammer Projects exhibitions each year, providing international and local artists with a laboratory-like environment to create new work or to present existing work in a new context.

As a cultural center, the Hammer offers a diverse range of free public programs throughout the year, including lectures, readings, symposia, film screenings, and music performances. The Hammer's Billy Wilder Theater houses these widely acclaimed public programs and is the new home of the UCLA Film & Television Archive's renowned cinematheque.

### **HAMMER MUSEUM INFORMATION**

For current program and exhibition information call **310-443-7000** or visit **[www.hammer.ucla.edu](http://www.hammer.ucla.edu)**.

**Hours:** Tuesday–Friday 11am–8pm; Saturday & Sunday 11am–5pm; closed Mondays, July 4, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

**Admission:** **FREE FOR ALL VISITORS BEGINNING FEBRUARY 9, 2014.** Currently: \$10 for adults; \$5 for seniors (65+) and UCLA Alumni Association members; free for museum members, students with identification, UCLA faculty/staff, military personnel, veterans, and visitors 17 and under. The museum is free on Thursdays for all visitors. Public programs are always free.

**Location/Parking:** The Hammer is located at 10899 Wilshire Boulevard, at Westwood Boulevard. Parking is available under the Museum. Rate is \$3 for three hours with Museum validation. Bicycles park free. The Museum is easily accessible via public transportation.

**Hammer Museum Tours:** For group tour reservations and information, call 310-443-7041.

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### KELLY NIPPER: BLACK FOREST

On view at the Hammer Museum, December 21, 2013 – February 23, 2014



Los Angeles—For her project *Black Forest*, Los Angeles–based artist **Kelly Nipper** creates an environment equally informed by mythology and reality, by history and the present, by movement and objects. The project is inspired in part by the Black Forest—a wooded mountain range in Germany that has spawned a number of legends featuring clairvoyants, magicians, sorcerers, and witches but is perhaps best known for clock making and intricately decorative wood carving. The installation is a landscape of sorts, filled with a variety of objects arranged on tables, resting on the floor, and leaning against or pinned to the walls. It appears to be simultaneously a working studio space, an archive, and a theatrical setting, but might best be understood as a *Wunderkammer*—literally a “wonder room”—a cumulative and layered microcosm always in the process of changing.

Nipper’s long-standing interest in craft movements has resulted in objects made from hand-dyed textiles, slipcast ceramics, and carved wood. The exhibition also includes a number of drawings of patterns that reflect a grammar of the body’s motion. These patterns are drawn from the artist’s ongoing exploration of the influential movement theories of the Hungarian dancer and choreographer Rudolf Laban, who figured prominently in the development of modern dance in the first half of the 20th century. In its third iteration, presented in the Hammer’s Vault Gallery, Nipper’s *Black Forest* presents a series of 11 movement performances rooted in a system called Laban Movement Analysis featuring dancer Marissa Ruazol. *Black Forest* is organized by senior curator Anne Ellegood.

#### Performance Schedule:

Saturday, December 21, [12pm](#) and [2pm](#)

Thursday, January 9, [6pm](#)

Saturday, January 11, [2pm](#)

Sunday, January 19, [2pm](#)

Sunday, January 26, [2pm](#)

Sunday, February 2, [2pm](#)

Sunday, February 9, [1pm](#)

Thursday, February 13, [7pm](#)

Thursday, February 20, [7pm](#)

Friday, February 21, [7pm](#)

## **Biography**

Kelly Nipper was born 1971 in Edina, Minnesota. Her photographs, videos, installations and performances have been featured in solo exhibitions at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY (2013); Kunsthaus Zürich, Switzerland (2013); The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2013); Tramway, Glasgow, Scotland (2012); and the Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX (2007). Her work has also been included in group exhibitions at the Deutsches Hygiene-Museum, Dresden, Germany (2013); Centre Pompidou, Paris, France (2011); Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, UK (2011); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY (2010); Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich, Switzerland (2010); Institute for Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, PA (2009); and Performa, New York, NY (2007). She received her MFA from California Institute of the Arts and BFA from Minneapolis College of Art and Design. Nipper is currently an artist-in-residence with A-I-R Laboratory at Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw, Poland.

*Kelly Nipper: Black Forest* is co-commissioned by TRAMWAY, Glasgow; Kunsthaus Zurich; and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles.

The exhibition received generous support from Stacy and John Rubeli.

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