

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

### **Guy Ben-Ner: Treehouse Kit**

At the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal

February 10 to April 22, 2007

Montréal, January 24, 2007. Come and admire the disconcerting ingenuity of this shipwrecked artist who, in the twinkling of an eye, transforms a tree into various pieces of furniture. The Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal presents **Guy Ben-Ner: Treehouse Kit** from February 10 to April 22, 2007.

#### **Treehouse Kit**

Working in drawing, sculpture and, above all, video, Guy Ben-Ner takes the raw material for his video creations from his everyday reality and his home life. He enlists his family members, uses his apartment and its furniture as a set, and assumes a role himself in productions abounding in references to literature, film and art.

In *Treehouse Kit*, Ben-Ner offers a hilarious new reading of the myth of Robinson Crusoe and our ready-to-assemble society. The installation consists of two components: a modular, wood sculpture—the tree—and a video in which the artist himself plays Crusoe, complete with his symbolic attributes: a long beard and... blue-flowered Bermuda shorts! Parodying “how-to” videos and the illusion of “building” from a kit, our latter-day Crusoe dismantles the tree and cleverly puts it back together in the form of furniture: a rocking chair, a table, a parasol, a bed. The simultaneous presentation of the two parts (video and sculpture) takes us on a circular journey in which the furniture made from the tree is actually the material from which the tree was created, and so forth.

Instructive in tone, with a note of caricature and irony as well, this work also throws out a political and humanistic challenge: How should we rethink our relationship with nature and the impact we have on the environment ?

The exhibition also presents *Moby Dick* (2000), a video running 12 min 35 s, likewise inspired by a famous tale of adventure on the high sea, recreated in the artist's kitchen with his family as performers.

#### **Guy Ben-Ner**

Born in Ramat Gan, Israel, in 1969, Guy Ben-Ner lives and works in New York and Berlin. He has shot to international renown in less than a decade, particularly since *Treehouse Kit* was shown in the Israeli pavilion at the 2005 *Venice Biennale*. In 2006 alone, he was the subject of five solo exhibitions, at the Konrad Fisher Galerie, Düsseldorf; Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris; Postmasters Gallery, New York; CCP – Centre for Contemporary Photography, Fitzroy; and Center for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv. This coming summer, he will take part in the highly prestigious *Skulptur Projekte Münster*.

The exhibition curator and author of the catalogue is Gilles Godmer; the presentation at the Musée was organized by curator Mark Lanctôt.

## **Catalogue**

A 24-page catalogue accompanies the exhibition. It includes an introduction by Gilles Godmer, an interview with the artist, a selective biobibliography and reproductions of works. It may be purchased for \$11.95 at the museum's Olivieri Bookstore or from your local bookseller.

## **Meet the Artist**

Guy Ben-Ner will meet the public on Friday, February 9, 2007 at 5:30 p.m. in the Banque Laurentienne Gallery. The meeting will take place in English.

The Musée d'art contemporain is a provincially owned corporation funded by the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec. It receives additional funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Canada Council for the Arts, as well as from Lichen Communications.

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