

Oakville Galleries hosts only Ontario stop of National Gallery of Canada exhibition

For release June 24, 2010

OAKVILLE, ON – Oakville Galleries is pleased to present the only Ontario stop of the National Gallery of Canada's touring exhibition *Real Life*, featuring artists Ron Mueck (on view at Oakville Galleries at Centennial Square) and Guy Ben-Ner (on view at Oakville Galleries in Gairloch Gardens). This exhibition will be on view at Oakville Galleries from June 26 until September 5, 2010.

Join us for the exhibition opening tomorrow, Friday June 25, from 7:30 pm–8:30 pm at Oakville Galleries at Centennial Square, followed by a reception at Oakville Galleries in Gairloch Gardens from 8:30 pm–10:30 pm.

Real Life showcases the work of two important figures in contemporary art: internationally renowned sculptor Ron Mueck, and the Berlin-based video artist Guy Ben-Ner. The extraordinary hyper-realist sculptures of Ron Mueck revisit the course of life from birth to death, while Guy Ben-Ner's affectionate and intimate "home videos" dwell on more precise moments when life and our relations with others begin. Together, the work of these two artists creates a narrative about the contradictions, challenges, and creative possibilities of the human condition.

The magical, life-like quality of Mueck's hyper-realist sculptures is striking. They show no traces of the artist's hand, which allows each work to create its own psychological effect—from defiance to puzzlement to sorrow—without an apparent mediator. The artist's sculptures not only engage the viewer in an emotional voyage from birth to death, but present a poignant image of the existential problem of the human condition.

Guy Ben-Ner's seemingly off-the-cuff "home videos," created in collaboration with his family, are actually carefully constructed, often taking over a year to make, governed as they are by innumerable hours of editing and the restrictions of working with children. His narratives have clearly delineated plots from beginning to end that interrogate such archetypal human concepts as love and marriage, necessity and shelter, desire and responsibility.

According to Jonathan Shaughnessy, curator of the exhibition, "*Real Life* draws connections between two very different artists who share a common interest in a direct, hands-on approach capable of bridging the gap between experience and our reflection on it. In this, neither Ron Mueck nor Guy Ben-Ner stray very far away from 'real life'—in artistic process or content—as they work to diffuse the boundaries between art and everyday life."

Organized by the National Gallery of Canada and presented by Oakville Galleries, the exhibition features two sculptures by Mueck and five works by Ben-Ner. An extensive display of preparatory materials for each artist, including sketches, maquettes and storyboards is also featured.

Curator of the exhibition

Real Life is curated by Jonathan Shaughnessy, Assistant Curator of Contemporary Art at the National Gallery of Canada (NGC). In 2007, he was the curator of *One, Some, Many: 3 Shows by Carsten Höller*, displayed at Shawinigan Space. He also collaborated in the organization of two exhibitions – *Cai Guo-Qiang: Long Scroll* (2006) and *The Elements of Nature* (2005)—also presented at Shawinigan Space and in 2006, he co-organized *Art Metropole: The Top 100*, exhibited at the NGC. Most recently he was the coordinating curator for the exhibition currently on

view in Ottawa, *Pop Life: Art in a Material World*, organized by Tate Modern, London, in association with the National Gallery of Canada.

Upcoming events at Oakville Galleries:

ARTbus: Exhibition tour to the Art Gallery of Mississauga, Blackwood Gallery and Oakville Galleries

Sunday 11 July, 11:30 am to 5:30 pm

Bus pick-up and drop-off at OCAD, 100 McCaul Street, Toronto

Cost: \$10, includes refreshments provided by Whole Foods Market

At the Art Gallery of Mississauga, visit the exhibition *Art at Work: Corporate Collecting Practices Today* with a guided tour by guest curator Geraldine Davis. Discover Blackwood Gallery's off-site exhibition, *The Projects: Port Credit*, in the company of Director/Curator Christof Migone. At Oakville Galleries, tour the exhibition *Real Life* with Director Matthew Hyland and independent curator Jacob Korczynski.

To reserve a seat on the ARTbus, contact artbus@oakvillegalleries.com or 905.844.4402, ext. 30 by Friday 9 July.

In-kind support by Whole Foods Market, Oakville.

Family Ties: A workshop for all ages

Saturday 17 July, 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm

Oakville Galleries in Gairloch Gardens

Free (advance registration is encouraged)

Inspired by the work of Guy Ben-Ner, this afternoon programme led by artists Emily Gove and Caitlin Harben will include a tour of the Galleries' summer exhibition, *Real Life*, followed by a family workshop where participants visually reinterpret classic narratives using readily-available materials. Transforming Gairloch Gardens into a platform for imaginative storytelling, this programme is open to families with children of all ages.

To register, contact publicprogrammes@oakvillegalleries.com or 905.844.4402, ext. 30 by Friday 16 July.

Oakville Galleries is a not-for-profit charitable public contemporary art museum serving communities in Oakville, Halton Region and wider audiences nationally and internationally. Oakville Galleries acknowledges the ongoing support of the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Corporation of the Town of Oakville, along with our many individual, corporate and foundation partners.

-30-

For more information:

Tracey Shepherd

905.844.4402, ext. 28

tracey@oakvillegalleries.com