

# MoMA PS1

## MoMA PS1 TO PRESENT FIRST SURVEY EXHIBITION IN THE UNITED STATES DEVOTED TO THE WORK OF JULIE BECKER

***Julie Becker: I must create a Master Piece to pay the Rent***

**June 9–September 2, 2019**

**2nd Floor, MoMA PS1**

LONG ISLAND CITY, New York, May 14, 2019— *I must create a Master Piece to pay the Rent* is the first museum survey exhibition devoted to the work of Julie Becker (American, 1972–2016), on view at MoMA PS1 from June 9 through September 2, 2019. Inspired by the psychological, cinematic, and physical geographies of her hometown of Los Angeles, Becker produced a rarely-seen body of installations, sculptures, drawings, photographs, and videos immersed in the human psyche's formulation of truth, fiction, and myth.

First presented at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London in 2018, the exhibition features an expanded presentation of Becker's work, including the artist's formative installation *Researchers, Residents, A Place to Rest* (1993-1996), a large architectural complex created while she was a student at Cal Arts. This major piece is joined by more than 60 photographs, works on paper, video installations, and sculptures. The exhibition also features the largest group of works to be shown together from *Whole* (1999–), a multimedia project that was still ongoing at the time of the artist's death. These works center on a run-down home in the Echo Park neighborhood of East Los Angeles that the California Federal Bank let the artist rent cheaply on the condition that she remove the belongings of the former tenant, who had passed away from AIDS-related complications.

At turns embellishing or skewering the idylls of the 20th-century American dream, Becker's singular aesthetic visions articulate the fantasies, nightmares, and dispossessions underpinning the social imaginary of late capitalism, with special emphasis on the loneliness and estrangement that results from social inequity. Drawing from sources as diverse as Stephen King's *The Shining*, Kay Thompson's children's book *Eloise*, and Disney's *The Gnome-Mobile*, Becker found inspiration in the Lifetime television network, and popular lore about the karmic convergences between MGM's 1939 musical fantasy *The Wizard of Oz* and Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side of the Moon*.

Dream scenarios weave throughout Becker's work, and her drawings feature fantastical inventions and landscapes. Her architectural spaces expand and contract, both realized at actual scale and in miniature. Becker's work reflects her own personal experiences living in precarious spaces, both as the child of itinerant artist

parents moving from one generic Los Angeles apartment complexes to another, or later as an adult living in a dilapidated building caught in the flux of real estate speculation. Within these works, the artist's chosen cultural references collide, rendering interior space as psychically charged and provisional, conjuring sites that function both as refuge and escape.

Julie Becker lived and worked in Los Angeles. Her work has been featured in exhibitions at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2018); Greene Naftali, New York (1996–2016); Seville Biennial, Spain (2006); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2003); the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2000); and the Kunsthalle Zurich, Switzerland (1997). Becker's work is held in public collections including The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Bronx Museum, New York; Hessel Museum of Art, Annandale-On-Hudson, NY; the Denver Art Museum, Colorado; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich.

*I must create a Master Piece to pay the Rent* is organized by The Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), London. The exhibition is curated by Richard Birkett and organized at MoMA PS1 by Jocelyn Miller, Assistant Curator, MoMA PS1.

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*I must create a Master Piece to pay the Rent* is made possible by the MoMA PS1 Annual Exhibition Fund.

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### **ABOUT MoMA PS1**

MoMA PS1 is devoted to today's most experimental, thought-provoking contemporary art. Founded in 1976 as the P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, it was the first nonprofit arts center in the United States devoted solely to contemporary art and is recognized as a defining force in the alternative space movement. In 2000 The Museum of Modern Art and P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center merged, creating the largest platform for contemporary art in the country and one of the largest in the world. Functioning as a living, active meeting place for the general public, MoMA PS1 is a catalyst for ideas, discourses, and new trends in contemporary art.

**Hours:** MoMA PS1 is open from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Thursday through Monday. Closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

**Admission:** \$10 suggested donation; \$5 for students and senior citizens; free for New York City residents, MoMA members, and MoMA admission ticket holders within 14 days of visit. Free admission as a Gift to New Yorkers made possible by the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation.

**Directions:** MoMA PS1 is located at 22-25 Jackson Avenue at 46th Ave in Long Island City, Queens, across the Queensboro Bridge from midtown Manhattan.

Traveling by subway, take the E, M, or 7 to Court Sq; or the G to Court Sq or 21 St-Van Alst. By bus, take the Q67 to Jackson and 46th Ave or the B62 to 46th Ave.

**Information:** For general inquiries, call (718) 784-2084 or visit [momaps1.org](http://momaps1.org).

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