Chilean Art of the 1970s Now

Renée Green

Pacing
Institution (Building)

Institution (Building) is an invitation to artists to consider the institutional behaviors and practices of CCVA at Harvard University. In repeated visits over the course of two years, artists engage through an expanded form of exhibition with various facets related to the archive, architecture, and history of the Carpenter Center. Their work manifests in anything from exhibitions, events, and installations to interventions, tours, and publications, taking shape and changing during the residency. Institution (Building) seeks to critically and thoughtfully recover the history of this institution and situate it within broader contexts of contemporary art, culture, and the extraordinary legacy of the Le Corbusier building.

Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts

Renée Green
Pacing
Within Living Memory
Feb 1–Apr 15, 2018
Opening: Thu, Feb 1, 6–8 pm

Public Program
Yvonne Rainer in conversation with Renée Green
Thu, Apr 12, 6 pm
Level 0, Lecture Hall

Cover, left, and p. 27: Americas : Veritas, 2018
Within Living Memory is an *ars poetica* by artist and filmmaker Renée Green. Her meditation was spurred by inhabiting a modernist architectural icon—Le Corbusier’s Carpenter Center—while exploring the historical and institutional legacies of modernism’s other forms, including cinema, visual art, poetry, music, and literature. Conceived as a constellation, the exhibition brings together interconnected bodies of work produced over the past decade that address conditions of residency and displacement, subjective experience, institutional memory, notions of progress, and the inevitability of decay, all the while rethinking how time is marked.

The exhibition showcases Green’s recent essay films, including *ED/HF* (2017), *Walking in NYL* (2016), and *Begin Again, Begin Again* (2015), and premieres *Americas : Veritas*, a new moving-image work composed of materials shot on location by the artist in Cambridge and Argentina as well as photographic documents sourced from the Harvard Libraries and Archives. *Within Living Memory* is the final installment of *Renée Green: Pacing*, the artist’s two-year residency at the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts.

Inhabiting all of the Center’s public spaces, the works included in the exhibition trace the reception and recirculation of various artistic and literary modernisms, offering new visual and aural linkages between diverse international figures and sites, spanning Asia, Europe, North America, and South America. Key among these is Green’s *Americas : Veritas* in which she positions the Cambridge-situated Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts in dialogue with Le Corbusier’s Casa Curutchet, located in La Plata, Argentina, as the architect’s only two built structures in the Americas, despite Le Corbusier’s ambition to apply his sweeping urbanistic vision to a variety of locations on both continents.

Exhibited alongside her previous time-based works on Viennese émigré architect Rudolf M. Schindler, literary luminaries Gertrude Stein, Laura (Riding) Jackson, and Muriel Rukeyser, and polymaths and activists Albert Einstein and Paul Robeson, Green’s new essay film is evincive of the artist’s long-standing consideration of the complex interfaces of international modernism as it continues to unfold today.

Moreover, *Within Living Memory* also features a rare presentation of Green’s installation *Secret* (1993, 2006, 2010). Comprised of a video in three parts, soundtracks in English and French, and 73 black-and-white photographs, *Secret* juxtaposes two of Green’s recurring tropes, “the document” and “the fictional,” to reflect on her experience inhabiting a semi-deserted apartment in Le Corbusier’s concrete housing block, Unité d’habitation, located in Firminy, France. Designed in 1952 as a utopian proposal for collective living, Green encountered the iconic housing complex as a “modern ruin” when she was invited to participate in the 1993 group exhibition *Project Unité*. As Green’s layered videos and soundtracks convey, the activities in the exhibition and the housing complex mutually refract one another, as the voiceover notes:
inclusion of photography, prints, banners, and her Media Bichos (2011–13), Green’s sculptural units for viewing moving-image materials, is specific to Green’s way of working—what she has described as a type of schematic, “a way of consistently combining: the spaces, the architectures, colors, and the moving images, and sonic circulations, and constructions, objects and things.”3 Importantly, it is not only the juxtaposition of works that yield their congruent aspects but also, as Green has poignantly written, “there is an excess that seeps out of the schematic, and it is this created tension/space—interval, break, interstice—that I like to probe.” This way of working allows Green to “animate in a simultaneous yet contrapuntal, layered way… and allows each percipient follow their own mental path, with its myriad associations, while encountering a composed form in a space.”4

Additionally, Within Living Memory can be read as a response to a question the artist first raised in a 2001 essay in which she asked: “How can a relationship with the past exist in which memory functions as an active process allowing continual reconsideration rather than as a form of entombment to which archives and museums are sometimes compared?”5 The variety of projects and artworks presented at the Carpenter Center advances a vital composite of several seemingly disparate narratives in order to complicate the way these histories often elide more complex issues, pointing to a nuanced understanding of our world’s relationality.

Collectively, the works included in the exhibition and enumerated in the following pages offer a methodology for accessing legacies of the cultural past, not to create a revisionist or counter narrative but to point out a generative mode of thinking and
living. Within Living Memory reflects the artist’s keen poetic ability to formally and conceptually composite empirical taxonomies. Dates, keywords, and geographical information are placed side by side with experiences to reveal overlaps, coincidences, and, above all, the possibilities for reimagining what we think we already know about history, place, and identity—a methodology that Green has advanced over the past thirty years with her complex, multilayered, and polymathic practice.

In this way, Within Living Memory is a continuation of the artist’s recurrent and ongoing methods of examining forms of relation—of perception, sensation, feeling, and thinking, through specific reconfigurations, in a manner she has articulated as “repetitions with differences.”6 Juxtaposing fragments of language and images, colors, sounds, and spatial arrangements, the variety of works that form Within Living Memory connect us to others like and unlike ourselves, operating as a salient reminder that cultural history is never fixed but constantly reframed, and must be reimagined from our ever-evolving vantage point of now.

2Ibid., 325.
3Ibid., 325.
4Ibid., 325.
5Ibid., 324.
Right: Media Bichos / Wavelinks at CCVA, 2017
Works in the Exhibition
Level 1

1. Begin Again, Begin Again
Digital film, sound, 40 min., 2015
Level 1, window projection

Built by Rudolph M. Schindler in 1922 as his home in West Hollywood, the Schindler House is considered a milestone in architectural modernism, a precedent to what was later designated as California Modernism and a utopian attempt at shaping new forms of collective living.

Jumping off from the notion of evocative objects as things that we think with and yet have an emotional valence, Green used in 2015 the Schindler House on Kings Road and its surrounding gardens as matter in space conjoined with dreams and memories, becoming a generative node for her ongoing explorations and imaginings. Inviting a circulatory experience in which space and attention (via movement and time) were used to “perform” the Schindler House, a heterogeneous cast of characters emerged from this nexus of imagined and lived experience, as well as perceptions of many modernities and what exceeds them.

Green posed several questions in this project, namely, “What did and may emerge from the coordinates of Vienna and Los Angeles in conjunction with a span of 128 years and the variety of subjectivities and histories invoked in the works presented? What do we see and hear when ideas migrate from one location to another?”

Begin Again, Begin Again is a reflection on living and dying during the span of 128 years from 1887 to 2015, as well as on perceptions of places on Earth, including the cities of Vienna and Los Angeles, amid many “elsewheres.” The architect R. M. Schindler is invoked via his 1912 manifesto, Modern Architecture: A Program, written before Schindler moved permanently in 1914 from Vienna to begin life in America, where he developed his Space Architecture. Yet the numbered pronouncements are interrupted by another consciousness’s musings on the strangeness of survival.
2. Spacing
Digital print, 22 x 29 in., 2016
Level 1

3. Walking in NYL
Digital film, silent, 45 min., 2016
Level 1, outdoor sunken patio

Walking in NYL is the latest iteration of a series of films initiated in 1992 with Tracing Lusitania, Green’s durational and accretive project showcasing the artist’s ongoing interests and relationships with the city of Lisbon and the Lusophone world. In the film, writing and the varieties of voices it invokes provide a mysterious passage through the highly sensorial streets of the city of NYL.

4. Selected Life Indexes
Letterpress, 2015, 2018
Level 1, ledge

Within Living Memory, 2015
Letterpress, 18 x 22 in.

Selected Life Indexes, 2015
Letterpress, 18 x 22 in.

Albert Einstein, 2015
Letterpress, 18 x 22 in.

Paul Robeson, 2015
Letterpress, 18 x 22 in.

Lou Harrison, 2018
Letterpress, 18 x 22 in.

W. E. B. Du Bois, 2018
Letterpress, 18 x 22 in.

Muriel’s Words, 2018
Letterpress, 10 prints, 18 x 22 in. each

Schindler Series
Letterpress, 2015
Level 1, ledge

A Manifesto: A Program, 2015
Letterpress, 2 prints, 18 x 22 in. each

Space Architecture, 2015
Letterpress, 18 x 22 in.

Years, 2015
Letterpress, 18 x 22 in.

Afters, 2015
Letterpress, 18 x 22 in.
5 & 6. Media Bichos and Space Poem #3 (Media Bicho)  
Wood frames, textiles, tables, and seating. Dimensions variable, 2012  
Polyester nylon and thread, 34 double-sided banners. Each 17 1/2 x 22 in. 2012-2013  
The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Study Collection. Levels 1 + 3

The term Media Bicho refers to a work, a space, and an intermediary system devised by Green in response to a 2010 commission by the Museum of Modern Art, New York, to create a permanent yet flexible viewing space that would allow the museum to publicly display its growing media and performance collection materials for the first time. Reflecting Green's original concept of creating an open system—a series of units that could contract or expand and allow for different configurations and modes of viewing of time-based media—seven Media Bichos are arranged in specific scenarios around the Carpenter Center accompanied by a vibrant textile banner work called Space Poem #3 (Media Bicho) that hangs from above. Collectively, the Media Bichos at CCVA continue Green's ongoing exploration of what she calls “forms of relation to spaces and locations that can be traversed and temporarily inhabited”—gesturing toward the kinds of social experiences that can take place within these types of designated viewing spaces.

Designed to facilitate ease of movement, while also providing a stable structural support, each Media Bicho is clad with textiles of varying degrees of opacity allowing the luminosity of natural light and the glow of screens to filter through, at times creating an animated space pulsing in both audio and visual tones. The panels pivot on specially designed hinges that allow for innumerable possibilities of shape, arrangement, and color configurations. Selected from Knoll's catalog of mid-century and contemporary fabrics, the palette and textures reference domestic living spaces as well as institutional ones, such as waiting areas, lounges, boardrooms, classrooms, and offices that developed in the wake of World War II academic, corporate, and civic expansion. The use of both modular forms and ubiquitous materials is a contemporary test of modernist design principles. Moreover, the double-sided color banners that constitute Space Poem #3 (Media Bicho) also reference the radical aspirations of Modernism. Reflecting Green’s long-standing interest in language as a technique of knowledge transmission and recuperation, here the phrases and statements drawn from myriad international sources are suggestive of the recombinant nature of Modernism, pointing to the possibilities for creating different pathways through history. And simultaneously, Space Poem #3 (Media Bicho) physically functions as a space-demarcating work, continuing Green’s formal engagement with color, split attention, and perceptual movement.

Media Bichos Film & Videos Program throughout the exhibition:  
8. Climates and Paradoxes and Selected Life Indexes, Level 1  
10. Secret, Level 3  
13. Endless Dreams and Water Between Series, Level 3  
14. Walking in NYL, Level 3

7. Muriel’s Words  
Sound installation, 50 min., 2004  
Level 1, outdoor lobby entrance
8. Climates and Paradoxes and Selected Life Indexes

Climates and Paradoxes
Digital film, sound, 41 min., 2005
In 2005, the inhabitation of a 1970s Berlin high-rise building triggers a matrix of associations to the past and present. As a celebration of the 100th anniversary of Albert Einstein’s theory of relativity unfolds during the year 2005, another view on Einstein’s life and times emerges encompassing his relations to several countries under varying conditions. Digging into the past of 123 Kurfürstenstrasse, other histories surface and blend with the present Berlin that is continually in the process of rebuilding beyond its ruins. Other figures, including Einstein, designated as strangers at different times, circulate between places and times, crossing each other’s paths. Throughout the juxtapositions of past and present, a paradox emerges: How to bring back the dislocated and the dead, not in order to chase away the ghosts but, rather, to welcome and grant them “the right to a hospitable memory out of a concern for justice”?

Selected Life Indexes
Video, silent, 119 min., 2005
A video work weaving, and putting in relation, Einstein’s social and political concerns with those of other internationalist and peace advocates: W. E. B. Du Bois, Paul Robeson, Muriel Rukeyser, and Lou Harrison.

Level 3

6. Space Poem #3 (Media Bicho)
9 & 10. Secret
Mixed media, dimensions variable, 1993, 2006, 2010
Level 3, corridor

Installation components:
Secret, 1993. 73 black-and-white photographs. 7 x 10 in. each
Secret Soundtrack (French Version), 2006, 36 min. Voice: Modou Dieng

Media Bichos Program:

In 1993, Renée Green inhabited a semi-deserted apartment in Le Corbusier’s Unité d’habitation concrete housing block located in Firminy, France. Designed in 1952 as a utopian proposal for collective living, Green encountered the iconic housing complex as a “modern ruin” when she was invited to participate in the signal group exhibition Project Unité, an early marker of site-responsive international exhibitions that developed in the 1990s. Green's resulting projects comprised three videos and soundtracks in English and French along with 73 black-and-white photographs measuring 7 x 10 in. each. The work's title alludes to a published volume of Le Corbusier's drawing studies of female nudes, as well as to Green's activities as the lone inhabitant of an apartment in the deserted half of the Unité during one week, including reading Émile Zola's novel Germinal, which is set in the region. Secret was first presented in situ in Green’s designated Unité apartment alongside those occupied by artists Christian Philipp Müller, Heimo Zobernig, Martha Rosler, Fareed Armaly, Clegg & Guttmann, and Mark Dion, among others. Installed in the Carpenter Center in 2018, Green's Secret mediates the reception of artistic residency and artistic presence in contemporary art history. Incorporating diaristic accounts alongside documentary images of the artist’s own camp-like living conditions within the crumbling architectural icon, the texts and images that comprise Secret convey exchanges with other international artists who will be taken up in the discourses on site specificity, negotiations with the exhibition organizers, conversations about what constitutes an audience with critics on the occasion of the public exhibition’s opening, and encounters with the housing complex’s full-time residents, many of whom were recent immigrants from North Africa. Throughout, Green’s own literary sources and references are layered. Examined through two of Green’s recurring tropes, “the document” and “the imaginary,” Secret elaborates on the contextual nature of occupancy as well as the provisional process of living, working, and inhabiting a space.
11. ED/HF and Americas : Veritas
Level 3, screening room

ED/HF
Digital film, sound, 33 min., 2017
Conceived as a “film as a conversation,” Green’s ED/HF is a cinematic meditation on lived experience, writing, film, and ongoing becomings. On its surface, ED/HF could be described as a double portrait of Green and artist and filmmaker Harun Farocki; but ED/HF’s primary focus is guided less by a binary comparison of these two personas and more by the pair’s personal experiences of migration and the legacies of displacement that have affected both the artists and their work.

A palimpsestic work, Green’s ED/HF touches on the many thresholds opened while thinking about an artist’s life and work. Questions of language, history, and image-reproduction technologies are rendered into a touching threnody, a mournful celebration of the power of art, film, and poetry.

Americas : Veritas
Digital film, sound, 7 min., 2018
A roving consciousness sees a congealed Americas, in which the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts is placed in dialogue with Le Corbusier’s Casa Curutchet, located in La Plata, Argentina.

12. Works on Paper
Level 3

Space Poem #2 (Laura’s Words), 2011
That Cannot Lie, In Words Not Born Yet, 2011
Silkscreen
18 x 23 in.

All-Wise Impermanence, 2011
Silkscreen
18 x 23 in.

Write Vision In A Tidal Hand, 2011
Silkscreen
18 x 23 in.

Endless Dreams and Water Between: Cast of Characters, 2011
Letterpress
18 x 22 in.

September Institute Preliminary Proposal
Letterpress
18 x 22 in.

Anything you create you create whole, whole moons of stones is being grinded.

Sinking connotations from dispersed lands, building worlds, time and space.

We continue the ongoing movement of commitment toward.

September Institute compiles and aggregates material from dispersed collections and publications, providing individual access and shared research tools, that enable curators and scholars to develop digital databases, operations, and productions of them who may have been heretofore invisible. S.I. believes our print books and print them to life.

September Institute is not a simple community, but rather a revolutionary one.
It exists in order to produce dialectic attempts to address shifting contemporary contexts. Addressing the production of our print legacies, our common, and undersimulated S.I. continues to press, however is different, in relation to time, with an understanding of time’s openness.

Immaterial and material how the shapes of time are considered, represented until death. These include books, printouts, notebooks, planes, and circulate image-based forms, i.e. digital. They are various statements, a story of experiences. S.I. produces books of collected data. Online version also exist.
Endless Dreams and Water Between [Drawings]
Mixed media: 6 maps, paper, vellum, 2009
22 x 30 in. each

Sigetics Color Series

William Morris, 2011
Letterpress + Digital Print, 2011
Edition of 10, 10 A.P.
18 x 22 in.

Gilles Deleuze, 2011
Letterpress + Digital Print
Edition of 10, 10 A.P.
18 x 22 in.

Gertrude Stein, 2011
Letterpress + Digital Print
Edition of 10, 10 A.P.
18 x 22 in.

[HUMANS] FIGHT AND LOSE THE BATTLE, AND THE THING THAT THEY FOUGHT FOR COMES ABOUT IN SPITE OF DEFEAT, AND WHEN IT COMES IT TURNS OUT NOT TO BE WHAT THEY MEANT, AND OTHER [HUMANS] HAVE TO FIGHT FOR WHAT THEY MEANT UNDER ANOTHER NAME.
13. **Endless Dreams and Water Between Series**  
Digital film, 2008, 2009  
Level 3  

*Endless Dreams and Water Between*, 2009  
Digital film, sound, 74 min.  
*Endless Dreams and Water Between* is a feature film with four fictitious characters sustaining an epistolary exchange in which their “planetary thought” is woven with the physical locations they inhabit, visual and aural characters in themselves: the island of Manhattan, the island of Majorca (in Spain), and the islands and peninsula that form the San Francisco Bay Area. The characters’ reflections and dreams enact what could be described as “an archipelagic mind,” linking worlds, time, and space.

**Come Closer**, 2008  
Digital film, silent, 13 min.  
A poetic meditation on distance, *Come Closer* is a short and peripatetic film casting an affective web between the locations of Lisbon, San Francisco, and Brazil. Focusing on Brazilian filmmaker Karim Ainouz, musician Derrick Green—the filmmaker’s brother and lead singer of Brazilian band Sepultura—and her own work produced in Lisbon since 1992, *Come Closer* can be thought of as a meditation on friendship and longing. Through its Portuguese narration, the film recasts Green’s ongoing relationship with the Lusophone world as a visceral reminder of the complexity of intertwined relations and how history resides in the present.

**Excess**, 2009  
Digital film, silent, 13 min.  
A rumination via handwritten index cards and an assortment of images recalling histories and ambitions of varied film productions.
14. Walking in NYL
Digital film, sound, 45 min., 2016
Level 3

Walking in NYL is the latest iteration of a series of films initiated in 1992 with Tracing Lusitania, Green’s durational and accretive project showcasing the artist’s ongoing interests and relationships with the city of Lisbon and the Lusophone world. In the film, writing and the varieties of voices it invokes provide a mysterious passage through the highly sensorial streets of the city of NYL.

The silent version of this work is located on Level 1, outdoor sunken plaza.

15. Accretive Case
Mixed media, 2018
Level 0, display case

Image credits: p. 17, image by Constance Mensh, courtesy of ICA, Philadelphia. All other images are courtesy of the artist and Free Agent Media, unless otherwise noted.
Exhibition Checklist

Level 1
1. Begin Again, Begin Again, 2015
2. Spacing, 2016
6. Space Poem #3 (Media Bicho), 2012-13
8. Media Bichos Program: Selected Life Indexes, 2005; Climates and Paradoxes, 2005 Space

Level 2
6. Poem #3 (Media Bicho), 2012-13

Level 3

Level 0
3. Plaza
5. Display Case
6. Accretive Case, 2018

CCVA Level 3
Sert Gallery
Ramp to Quincy St, Harvard Yard
Entrance across ramp
Ramp to Harvard Art → Museums

CCVA Level 1
Entrance
Plaza
Harvard Film Archive →
Renée Green

Renée Green is an artist, writer, and filmmaker known for her highly layered and formally complex multimedia installations in which ideas, perception, and experience are examined from myriad perspectives. Via films, essays and writings, installations, digital media, architecture, sound-related works, film series and events her work engages with investigations into circuits of relation and exchange over time, the gaps and shifts in what survives in public and private memories as well as what has been imagined and invented.

Green's exhibitions, videos and films have been seen throughout the world in museums and art institutions, among them MAK Center for Art + Architecture at the Schindler House, West Hollywood; Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Museum of American Art and New Museum, all in New York; Musée cantonal des Beaux Arts, Lausanne; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco; National Maritime Museum, Greenwich; Jeu de Paume, Paris; Portikus, Frankfurt; Centro Cultural de Bélem, and Lumiar Cité, Lisbon; Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona; Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati; Vienna Secession; Stichting de Appel, Amsterdam; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Museum Ludwig, Cologne; MACBA, Barcelona; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Institute of Contemporary Art, London; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; International Center of Photography, New York & Louisiana Museum of Art, Copenhagen. Her work has also been present at the Whitney, Venice, Johannesburg, Kwangju, Berlin, Sevilla & Istanbul Biennials, as well as in Documenta 11 and Manifesta 7.

Her most recent books include Other Planes of There: Selected Writings (2014, Duke University Press, Durham), Endless Dreams and Time-Based Streams (2010, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco), and Ongoing Becomings (2009, Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne). She is also the editor of the collection of essays Negotiations in the Contact Zone (2003, Assírio & Alvim, Lisbon) and a Professor at the MIT Program in Art, Culture and Technology, School of Architecture & Planning.

Pacing: Within Living Memory is the final installment of a series of brochures published during Renée Green’s Institution (Building) residency.
