



January 2006

Brooklyn Museum to Present First William Wegman Retrospective in Fifteen Years

On View March 10 Through May 28, 2006

The Brooklyn Museum will be the first venue of *William Wegman: Funney/Strange*, an exhibition exploring forty years of Wegman's work in all media. The first retrospective of this artist's work in more than fifteen years, the exhibition will be on view from March 10 through May 28. Included will be more than 200 works, among them the signature 20 x 24 Polaroids, early black-and-white and altered photographs, as well as paintings, drawings, collages, artist books, videos, and film.

The exhibition has been organized by the Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts, and curated by the independent curator Trevor Fairbrother. Generous support for this exhibition and publication was provided by The Henry Luce Foundation.

After its premiere at Brooklyn, *William Wegman: Funney/Strange* will travel to the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C.; the Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach; and the Addison Gallery of American Art. An extensive catalogue, written by scholar and critic Joan Simon and published by Yale University Press in association with the Addison Gallery of American Art, will accompany the exhibition.

William Wegman: Funney/Strange is sponsored at the Brooklyn Museum by Commerce Bank. Additional support is provided by the Brooklyn Museum's Martha A. and Robert S. Rubin Exhibition Fund. *AM New York* is media sponsor.

Underlying all of William Wegman's work is a light humor that mediates a darker strangeness. The exhibition examines a career that has never been static or predictable yet is woven of interests and explorations that engaged the artist at the start and compel him still. Coming of age in the 1960s, Wegman was an early exponent of Conceptual Art and a pioneering maker of video. He continues to be a video artist and conceptual thinker as well as an adventurous painter, prolific writer, and masterful photographer who is able to create art that amuses and surprises while it challenges and transforms.

Born in Holyoke, Massachusetts, in 1943, Wegman received a BFA from the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston and an MFA from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. In Illinois and later in Wisconsin, he began to experiment with a wide range of media—film, kinetic sculpture, installation, and performance. While teaching at California State College in Long Beach in the 1970s, Wegman developed what was to be his mature artistic voice

Brooklyn Museum

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expressed in his signature media of photography, video, and text. It was in California that he acquired his canine muse Man Ray and began to include the dog in both photographs and video. By the fall of 1972, he moved to New York where he has remained ever since, applying his quirky and unpredictable imagination and expansive artistic appetite to a career that has been far ranging and provocative.

Beloved by the general public and held in critical esteem internationally, Wegman fascinates both audiences for much the same reason: a smart, gently subversive humor that destabilizes the familiar to reveal life's essential oddity. Throughout his career, he has moved seamlessly from conceptual works to commissioned magazine shoots, from video work to television segments made for *Sesame Street* and *Saturday Night Live*; from artist's books to children's books, from photographic "landscapes" employing his dogs to his most recent series of paintings that incorporate scenic postcards with drawing, collage, and painting. This exhibition will bring classic Wegman images together with rarely exhibited material and surprising new work to reveal the full range and savvy voice of this remarkable artist's production.

Trevor Fairbrother is an independent curator and scholar who has worked on a wide range of topics, from Andy Warhol to John Singer Sargent. He has served as a curator of American painting and of contemporary art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and as Deputy Director for Art at the Seattle Art Museum. Joan Simon is curator-at-large for the Whitney Museum of American Art. She has written extensively on contemporary art, including Ann Hamilton and Susan Rothenberg. Marilyn Kushner, Chair of the Department of Prints, Drawings, and Photographs at the Brooklyn Museum, is the coordinating curator for the Brooklyn presentation.

Tour Schedule

Brooklyn Museum
Brooklyn, New York

March 10–May 28, 2006

Smithsonian American Art Museum
Washington, D. C.

July 4–September 24, 2006

Norton Museum of Art
West Palm Beach, Florida

November 4, 2006–January 28, 2007

Addison Gallery of American Art
Phillips Academy
Andover, Massachusetts

April 7–July 31, 2007

End

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GENERAL INFORMATION**Admission:**

Contribution \$8; students with valid I.D. and older adults \$4. Free to Members and children under 12 accompanied by an adult. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling extension 234.

Directions:

Subway: Seventh Avenue express (2 or 3) to Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum stop; Lexington Avenue express (4 or 5) to Nevins Street, cross platform and transfer to the 2 or 3. Bus: B71, B41, B69, B48. On-site parking available.

Museum Hours:

Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; First Saturday of each month, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.; all other Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.