NEWS RELEASE

PARSONS PRESENTS DORMITORIUM:
AN EXHIBITION OF FILM ‘DÉCORS’ BY THE QUAY BROS.

First North American Exhibition for Acclaimed Stop-Motion Animators Stephen and Timothy Quay

On View at the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Gallery
Sheila C. Johnson Design Center
Parsons The New School for Design
July 15—October 4, 2009

NEW YORK, June 1, 2009 – Parsons The New School for Design will present Dormitorium: An Exhibition of Film Decors by the Quay Bros., from July 15 through October 4, 2009 at the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Gallery at the Sheila C. Johnson Design Center. The exhibition explores the macabre fantasy world of twin brothers Stephen and Timothy Quay through the highly detailed miniature sets of their influential stop-motion animations. Organized by The University of the Arts, Philadelphia, Dormitorium represents the first time the sets (décors) of the London-based Quays have been exhibited in North America.

The Quay Brothers have built a cult following with their dark, moody films, which are heavily influenced by Eastern European film, literature, and music and often feature disassembled dolls and no spoken dialogue. The exhibition will combine 11 rarely seen, collaboratively designed miniature décors from some of the Quays’ most prominent works, as well as continuous screenings of excerpts from several of the films. Featured works include Street of Crocodiles (1986), The Epic of Gilgamesh, or This Unnameable Little Broom (1985), Stille Nacht I: Dramolet (1988), The Comb (1990), Rehearsals for Extinct Anatomies (1988), The Cabinet of Jan Svankmajer (1984), The Calligrapher (1991), and the feature film The PianoTuner of EarthQuakes (2006).

"Exploring the design process is an important part of a Parsons education, and Dormitorium goes beyond retrospective to really investigate the nature of creative work," said Lydia Matthews, the dean of academic programs at Parsons The New School for Design. "This exhibition gives our students an opportunity to see how the Quay brothers create intricate fantasy worlds, from set design to finished film, through their compelling engagement with literature, their command of sound and lighting design, their uncanny use of focus, color and texture, as well as their mastery of digital editing processes."

MORE
Famously reclusive brothers Stephen and Timothy Quay claim writers Franz Kafka and Robert Walser, animators Walerian Borowczyk and Jan Lenica, puppeteers Wladyslaw Starewicz and Richard Teschner, and composers Leoš Janáček, Zdenek Liška, and Leszek Jankowski among their influences. They were born and raised in Norristown, Pennsylvania, and studied at Philadelphia College of Art (now The University of the Arts) before moving to London in the 1970s to attend the Royal College of Art, where they made their first film.

Since 1979, they have produced over 30 animated works, including the critically acclaimed *Street of Crocodiles*, an adaptation of the Bruno Schulz novel by the same name, hailed by Terry Gilliam as “one of the top ten best animated films of all time.” The Quays' body of work also includes three feature films: *The Institute Benjamenta, or This Dream People Call Human Life* (1995), *PianoTuner of EarthQuakes* (2006), and *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*, an adaptation of another Schulz text, which is in pre-production. Currently, the Quays are working on an adaptation of a short story by Polish science fiction author Stanislaus Lem. During the past decade, the Quays have also designed numerous stage sets for opera, ballet and theatre productions and their 1998 Tony-nominated set designs for Ionesco's *The Chairs* won great acclaim on Broadway.

*Dormitorium: Film 'Décors' of the Quay Bros.* was organized by The University of the Arts, Philadelphia. Following its presentation at Parsons, the exhibition will travel to Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia.

**About the Sheila C. Johnson Design Center at Parsons**

The Sheila C. Johnson Design Center is an award-winning new campus center for Parsons The New School for Design that combines learning and public program spaces with exhibition galleries to provide an important new downtown destination for art and design programming. The center was made possible in part by a $7 million gift from New School Trustee and Parsons Board of Governors Chair Sheila C. Johnson. The design by Lyn Rice Architects, whose principal Lyn Rice was part of the team behind Dia:Beacon, combines the ground level of four historic buildings to form an innovative, contemporary “urban quad.” The center is the recipient of numerous awards, including a 2008 AIA Honor Award for Interior Architecture. For more information, please visit [www.newschool.edu/johnsondesigncenter](http://www.newschool.edu/johnsondesigncenter).

**About Parsons The New School for Design**

Parsons The New School for Design is one of the most prestigious and comprehensive institutions of art and design in the world. Located in New York City, Parsons prepares students to creatively and critically address the complex conditions of contemporary global society. Combining rigorous craft with cutting-edge theory and research methods, Parsons encourages collaborative and individual approaches that cut across a wide array of disciplines. For more information, please visit [www.parsons.newschool.edu](http://www.parsons.newschool.edu).

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Sheila C. Johnson Design Center
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Exhibition Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artwork</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bruno Schulz's Street of Crocodiles (Grand Box)</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>55 x 37½ x 41 ¼ in.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bruno Schulz's Street of Crocodiles (Tailor's Shop)</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>35½ x 26 x 30 ½ in.</td>
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<tr>
<td>This Unnameable Little Broom</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>52 x 38 x 35 ½ in.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artwork Title</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Dimensions</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Stille Nacht I (The Lining of Sleep)</em></td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>21 x 17 ¾ x 18 in.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Comb (From the Museums of Sleep)</em></td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>43 ¾ x 25 x 30 ¾ in.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Rehearsals for Extinct Anatomies (O Inevitable Fatum)</em></td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>16 ½ x 20 x 15 ½ in.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Alchemist of Prague (The Cabinet of Jan Švankmajer)</em></td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>37 x 30 x 30 in.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artwork</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Calligrapher (BBC 2 Ident)</em></td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>30 x 20 ½ x 20 in.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Rehearsals for Extinct Anatomies (They Think They’re Alone)</em></td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>31 x 25 x 27 in.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Piano Tuner of Earthquakes (Lacimi Christi)</em></td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>56 ½ x 31 x 42 ½ in.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Piano Tuner of Earthquakes (Wood Chopper)</em></td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>32 x 31¾ x 34½ in.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FILMOGRAPHY: QUAYS

1984  THE CABINET OF JAN ŠVANKMÄJER: PRAGUE'S ALCHEMIST OF FILM
1985  THIS UNNAMEABLE LITTLE BROOM
1986  STREET OF CROCODILES
1987  REHEARSALS FOR EXTINCT ANATOMIES
1988  STILLE NACHT I: »DRAMOLET«
1989  Ex Voto
1990  The Comb
1991  ANAMORPHOSIS
      THE CALLIGRAPHER • BBC IDENT • REJECTED
1992  STILLE NACHT II: »ARE WE STILL MARRIED?«
1993  STILLE NACHT III: »TALES FROM VIENNA WOODS«
1994  STILLE NACHT IV: »CAN'T GO WRONG WITHOUT YOU«
1995  INSTITUTE BENJAMENTS: OR, THIS DREAM PEOPLE CALL HUMAN LIFE
1999  DUET • BALLET
2000  IN ABSENTIA
      THE SANDMAN • BALLET
2002  THE PHANTOM MUSEUM
2003  SONGS FOR DEAD CHILDREN
2005  THE PIANOTUNER OF EARTHQUAKES
2006  PILOT FOR »SANATORIUM UNDER THE SIGN OF THE HOURGLASS«
2007  ALICE IN NOT SO WONDERLAND
      EURYDICE, SHE SO BELOVED • BALLET
2008  BRING ME THE HEAD OF UBU ROI • PROJECTIONS
      INVENTORIUM OF TRACES • JAN POTOCKI AT CASTLE LAŇCUT

CURRICULUM VITÆ: QUAY BROTHERS

THE QUAY BROTHERS were born near Philadelphia where they studied at the Philadelphia College of Art, then later in London at the Royal College of Art. In 1980 they formed KONINCK with colleague Keith Griffiths and since then they have produced a hybrid variety of puppet animation film work: documentaries on Stravinsky, Janáček, Anamorphosis; interludes • MTV • ; commercials, as well as films inspired by the writings of Kafka, Bruno Schulz • STREET OF CROCODILES •, and Robert Walser • INSTITUTE BENJAMENTS • • a live action feature for Channel 4.

THEIR WORK also includes decors for the following opera and theatre productions: Prokofiev's • LOVE FOR THREE ORANGES • • Opera North / English National Opera; Feydeau's • A FLEA IN HER EAR • • Old Vic; Tchaikovsky's • МИРЗЕППА • • Bregenz Festival / Netherlands Opera; Molière's • LE BOURGEOIS GENTILHOMMES • • Royal National Theatre; Shakespeare's • MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM • • Almeida; Ionesco's • THE CHAIRS • •
Theatre de Complicite / Royal Court; and for the Wiener Festwochen Olga Neuwirth's opera *BAALAAM'S FEST*.

For the ballets of Kim Brandstrup they have designed *Dybbuk* - *The Place; The Hour We Knew Nothing of Each Other* - Malmo Dramatiska Theatre; and *Cupid and Psyche* - Royal Danish Ballet. For Channel 4 they have directed as part of a series pairing choreographers with filmmakers *Duet*, a ballet choreographed by Will Tuckett from the Royal Ballet. For the BBC they have made *In Absentia* - a collaboration with the composer Karlheinz Stockhausen; and for Channel 4, again with choreographer Will Tuckett, they have made a forty minute ballet based on E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Sandman*. For Tate and Egg Live, they have filmed Steve Martland's *Street Songs* conducted by Sir John Eliot Gardiner and for the Wellcome Trust they have made a short documentary film called *The Phantom Museum* which was shown as part of the Wellcome Trust's exhibition called »Medicine Man« at the British Museum. In 2005 they completed their second feature film *The Piano Tuner of Earthquakes*.

Following that they designed the décors and projections for a newly commissioned opera *The Cricket Recovers* by the composer Richard Ayres for Aldeburgh / Almeida Opera. Presently they have just finished a pilot film for Bruno Schulz's *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*. For Live Earth they made the short film *Alice in Not so Wonderland* followed thereafter by opera décors for Benjamin Britten's *Paul Bunyan* for Bregenz/Luzern. And more recently they have completed two installation pieces, one for Castle Belsay and the other for Opera North celebrating the 400th anniversary of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*. This included an Optical Box along with a filmed ballet choreographed by Kim Brandstrup, sung by Simon Keenlyside, and danced by Zenaida Yanowsky of the Royal Ballet. The film décors from all their puppet films called *Dormitorium*, originally commissioned by the Holland Music Festival, is currently travelling around European cities and has been seen in Riga, Exeter, Lisboa, the Festival d'Avignon, Tokyo, Brighton, and soon in Philadelphia. For Père Ubu, they have most recently made film projections at the QEH London for *Bring Me the Head of Ubu Ro*. Presently they have just finished a short documentary film in Poland called *Inventorium of Traces - Jan Potocki at Castle Łańcut* and are about to commence a short film for the Polish Cultural Institute in London on a short story by Stanislaw Lem called *Maska*. 
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