

**THE BMA PRESENTS A FILM BY TAMAR GUIMARÃES & KASPER AKHØJ  
IN BLACK BOX GALLERY STARTING FEBRUARY 8, 2017**

***Captain Gervasio's Family takes a meditative look at the mediums of Palmelo, Brazil***

BALTIMORE, MD (February 7, 2017)—The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) presents *Black Box: Tamar Guimarães & Kasper Akhøj*, on view February 8 through June 11, 2017. The exhibition includes a presentation of Guimarães' and Akhøj's 16-minute film *Captain Gervasio's Family* (2013-2014), featuring the many spirit mediums of Palmelo, Brazil. The presentation of the film is organized by Senior Curator of Contemporary Art Kristen Hileman and presented in the Black Box Gallery in the museum's Contemporary Wing.



Throughout their work, the Copenhagen-based collaborators explore the structure of social space and hierarchies, within both small communities and geographically or racially defined groups of people. *Captain Gervasio's Family* provides a view into the Spiritist community of Palmelo, a town of 2,000 people of whom at least half are psychic mediums. Spiritism is a practice influenced by Allan Kardec, a 19th-century French scholar whose theories about communicating with the dead reached an international audience. The artists do not undertake a critical view of the practice, instead they deploy the luminous, flickering effect of 16mm film to evoke the movement of psychic energy between this world and the "astral cities" that hover above.

The film's montage of closely cropped images of Palmelo's mediums and details of Brazil's modernist architecture suggest surprising relationships between the organization of the psychics' activity and their country's bureaucracy. Many of the mediums work as civil servants, and their descriptions of the cities of the dead include physical and administrative structures that, while idealized, resemble that of government offices. Visually, the interconnected steps, window ledges, and paving blocks of characteristically Brazilian buildings recall the joined hands of mediums performing "magnetic chains" to aggregate their healing powers. At the same time, opposition between Spiritist belief and official Brazil is revealed in the recounting of the government's closure of a Palmelo psychiatric facility dedicated solely to treatments using psychic forces.

Tamar Guimarães (Brazilian, b. 1967) is a video, sound and installation artist whose work has been exhibited in numerous art fairs, including the São Paulo Biennial and Venice Biennale. She has also had solo exhibitions at the Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane (2009); Artspace Sydney (2010); Gasworks, London (2011); and the Århus Kunstbygning, Denmark (2012). Her work was nominated for the Premio Investidor Profissional Art Prize (PIPA) 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013.

Kasper Akhøj (Danish, b. 1976) is a mixed-media artist whose recent solo exhibitions include *Welcome (TO THE TEKNIVAL)* at the Künstlerhaus Stuttgart, *Overgaden* at the Institute for Contemporary Art in Copenhagen, and *After The Fair* at the Wiels Centre for Contemporary Art, Brussels. His work has also been shown at Ludlow 38/Goethe Institute, New York and 28th São Paulo Biennial. In 2010, he was an artist-in-residence at the 29th São Paulo Biennial, in addition to Platform Garanti in Istanbul, Turkey.

*Captain Gervasio's Family* is presented in partnership with The Johns Hopkins University's Center for Advanced Media Studies (CAMS). Guimarães and Akhøj will be in residence at The Johns Hopkins University this spring.

### **THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART**

The Baltimore Museum of Art is home to an internationally renowned collection of 19th-century, modern, and contemporary art. Founded in 1914 with a single painting, the BMA today has 95,000 objects—including the largest public holding of works by Henri Matisse. Throughout the museum, visitors will find an outstanding selection of American and European painting, sculpture, and decorative arts; works by established and emerging contemporary artists; significant artworks from China; stunning Antioch mosaics; and an exceptional collection of art from Africa. The BMA's galleries also showcase examples from one of the nation's finest collections of prints, drawings, and photographs and exquisite textiles from around the world. The 210,000-square-foot museum is distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope and two beautifully landscaped sculpture gardens. As a major cultural destination for the region, the BMA hosts a dynamic program of exhibitions, events, and educational programs throughout the year. General admission to the BMA is free so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

### **VISITOR INFORMATION**

General admission to the BMA is free. Special exhibitions may be ticketed. The BMA is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 a.m.–5 p.m. The museum is closed Monday, Tuesday, New Year's Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. The BMA is located at 10 Art Museum Drive, three miles north of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. For general museum information, call 443-573-1700 or visit [artbma.org](http://artbma.org).

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**Image:** Tamar Guimarães and Kasper Akhøj. Still from *Captain Gervasio's Family*. 2013/2014. 16mm film projection, concrete and wood. 16 minutes. Courtesy of the artists, Galeria Fortes Vilaça and Ellen De Bruijne Projects, BMA 17774.