

University Art Museum

Pacific Film Archive

December 1989 Calendar

● Thursday December 14

An Evening of Collaborations with
Paul McCarthy, the Yonemotos
& Ericka Beckman

Mike Kelley: Post-Renaissance Man 7:30

Somewhere in Los Angeles, Mike Kelley is working. But on what, who knows? Kelley is an artist who appropriates whatever medium suits his goals, whether it be installation, performance, text, sculpture, or the moving image. In his video ventures, he has worked in various collaborative capacities, as actor, director and writer. What unites all of these efforts is a gymnastic use of language, a visual presence that juggles the ingenious with the grotesque, and a flip-flopping sexuality. In Paul McCarthy's *Family Tyranny*, Kelley plays pliable son to an abusive father. Battered and disciplined, he grovels, moans and begs under the father's sadistic stare. During a scene of mock masturbation, Kelley ably transmits the contradictory currents of sexual upheaval and parental domination. Kelley's *Banana Man* is a performance piece, re-envisioned for videotape. Using props and costumes, Kelley plots the demise of his anti-hero, an egoless buffoon. Just one of the bunch, *Banana Man* searches not for love but for any remnant of autonomy among the ruins. Kelley's text is all punnery and punishment, his performance, a howling, sexually retarded bit of discomfort. Colliding the suppressed eros of Oedipal myth with the unbridled libido of Kappa legend, Bruce and Norman Yonemoto's *Kappa* questions the Freudian-based theory of Occidental culture. Kelley plays the Kappa, a Japanese daemon. His interpretation has him a humorous sprite cut off from the permissive possibilities of contemporary culture. Ericka Beckman's *Blind Country* (with a script by Kelley) returns to a ground zero of the senses. Here, Kelley finds himself in a miasma where all socialization has been lost. Naked, he is led through this realm as he tries to re-organize sensual experience. He explores mundane objects, thinking they can be used for his own pleasure. With the progressive containment of his desires, Kelley regains mastery over impulse. Evolving from a being of undifferentiated sexuality to a man of Reason, Mike Kelley shows us the triumph of language over libido. —Steve Seid

• *Family Tyranny* by Paul McCarthy (1987, 8 mins).
• *Banana Man* by Mike Kelley (1983, 28 mins). *Kappa*
by Bruce and Norman Yonemoto (1986, 26 mins).
• *Blind Country* by Ericka Beckman (1989, 20 mins).
(Total running time: 82 mins, 3/4" cassettes from the
Artists and Electronic Arts Intermix).



Mike Kelley in *Blind Country*, a videotape by Ericka Beckman (Mike Kelley: Post-Renaissance Man, December 14).