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PSYCHIC NEIGHBOR

November 22, 2009 – January 17, 2010

Reception January 17, 6 – 10pm

November 11, 2009, NEW YORK - Ramiken Crucible is pleased to present *Psychic Neighbor*, a unique exhibition of two solo shows coexisting in one space. Featuring the work of Bec Brittain and Joe Brittain, two artists with very different work who happen to be married, *Psychic Neighbor* explores the work of each artist independently, yet at the same time, together.

Bec Brittain's sculpture and photography are the results of her radical process of re-engineering complex natural systems in irreverent and striking ways. Her bug sculptures, combining parts of insects, arachnids, crustaceans, and more, are perfect feats of physical precision that re-imagine the genetic evolution of these small creatures. The finished pieces, dubbed "monsters" by Brittain, are beautiful and delicate mash-ups of the intricate architecture of evolution. A graduate of NYU and the Architectural Association in London, Bec Brittain's approach to sculpture combines elements of architectural model making, the preciousness of contemporary creative design, and her own obsessions with the overlapping realms of philosophy, pseudoscience, and science fiction. Her newest sculptures, shown alongside her bugs, are experiments designed to grow crystals on the surface of rope. Inspired by discoveries made during her search for the right presentation method for her 'monsters', Brittain has created two structures that are at the same time models for crystal farming and radical sculptures reminiscent of Jean Tinguely and David Altmejd.

Joe Brittain's sculptures, drawings, and wheat pastings appear loose, ambivalent, and even arbitrary upon first glance, but are in fact tight articulations of secret alchemical combinations of materials, formulas and processes. Brittain's compositions reference geodes, mountains, minimalism, mine shafts, color field theory, Franz Kline, faux finishing, Mark Rothko, architectural obsolescence, aggregation and much more, fusing disparate ideas together into highly complex art objects that speak about the future and past of the built environment. Formal distinctions in Brittain's work between architectonic shapes, biological structures, and geographic topology are blurred and become slippery modes of psychic transformation, changing scale and definition with every intimately constructed detail. Brittain's larger works are sentient beings in and of themselves, reflecting humanity as a fractured, elusive, non-specific ghost, wandering through the Brutalist ruins of a utopian alien society. Fantastic and formally challenging, Brittain's work creates an uneasy ambiguity with charismatic presence and wit. Joe Brittain has a degree in art history from the University at Buffalo and recently returned from a residency at the Vermont Studio Center.

In response to questions about the show's title, the artists state: "*Psychic Neighbor* is open to poetic interpretation but contains a hint of paranoia, an 'Other' that is potentially listening to your thoughts, a world of minds separated by walls but still in communication." *Psychic Neighbor* is both Bec and Joe Brittain's first solo show in New York.

Ramiken Crucible is a new gallery dedicated to showing underground art and music. Ramiken Crucible is open Thursday - Sunday, 12 noon - 6pm, and is located at 221 East Broadway (at Clinton) on the LES.