

Spatial City: An Architecture of Idealism

From February 5 to December 30, 2010

Milwaukee, Chicago, Detroit

Inova (Milwaukee), Hyde Park Art Center (Chicago), MOCAD (Detroit) are pleased to announce that *Spatial City: An Architecture of Idealism*, a major touring exhibition of contemporary art drawn from the French Regional Contemporary Art Funds (Frac), will open on February 5, 2010 and will remain on view through December 30, 2010. *Spatial City* brings together an international, multi-generational array of artists—with an emphasis on artists living in France—whose work contends with idealism, utopian thinking and, in counterpoint, the cynicism that follows failed revolution and the retreat of optimism in the face of pragmatic reality.

This is the first exhibition of the Frac collections in the United States, and it will tour the Midwest throughout 2010. Curator Nicholas Frank (Inova, Peck School of the Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee) originated the concept and exhibition. Participating curators are Allison Peters Quinn (Hyde Park Art Center), Luis Croquer (Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit - MOCAD), Eva González-Sancho (Frac Bourgogne), Yannick Miloux (Frac Limousin) and Marie-Cécile Burnichon (Platform- (Regroupement des Fonds régionaux d'art contemporain – the association of the Frac). The project and tour were developed in partnership with Platform and Polly Morris (formerly of Inova) and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the United States.

The exhibition travels to:

- **The Institute of Visual Arts (Inova)** at the Peck School of the Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee from February 5-April 18, 2010
- **Chicago's Hyde Park Art Center** from May 23-August 8, 2010
- **The Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (MOCAD)** from September 10-December 30, 2010

About the Exhibition

Spatial City is an art exhibition inspired by the theoretical architecture of Yona Friedman. Friedman's ideas, disseminated in the aftermath of World War II, have influenced subsequent generations. French thinkers and conceptual artists have responded to his designs as philosophical constructs worthy of exploration, explication and confrontation. While Yona Friedman's "utopia réalisable" informed the framework of the show, the selection of artwork reflects the cycling and recycling of optimism and cynicism in postwar culture. Artists in the exhibition are responding to society's complex problems: the failed utopian social experiments that resulted in the dehumanizing conditions of Brutalist architecture, the rise and fall of totalitarian states, the tensions resulting from post-colonial immigration, and the destruction of the environment in the name of progress.

"Spatial City is a show about idealism," according to Nicholas Frank. "If idealism can be seen as having a structure—an architecture, because it is a made thing—we can imagine it as a more or less dialectical engine moving between poles of optimism and cynicism. Architecture informs this exhibition not as a practice but as a way of regarding the world." He continues, "Spatial City's potential will be fully realized in Detroit where Luis Croquer will expand on the exhibition's themes and ideas. Detroit, like Milwaukee and Chicago, is a Midwestern city struggling to sustain hope for its future during very difficult times, and it provides a potent background for the work in this exhibition and the ideas it explores."

Works in the exhibition are drawn from the following Frac collections : Alsace, Aquitaine, Auvergne, Basse-Normandie, Bourgogne, Bretagne, Centre, Champagne-Ardenne, Corse, Franche-Comté, Haute-Normandie, Ile-de-France/Le Plateau, Languedoc-Roussillon, Limousin, Lorraine, Nord-Pas de Calais, Pays de la Loire, Poitou-Charentes, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Réunion, and Institut d'art contemporain Villeurbanne/Rhône-Alpes.

There will be a catalog to accompany the exhibition, edited by Polly Morris with Marie-Cécile Burnichon. The catalog will feature photos from each institution's installation, along with critical essays, artist biographies and checklists of the work in the exhibition.

About the Frac and Platform

Since 1983, the Fonds régionaux d'art contemporain, or Regional Contemporary Art Funds (**Frac**), have played an important part in the history of cultural development in France, promoting and defining the role of art in the life of the country through educational programs, cultural activities involving research and leisure, and the creation of knowledge that improves self-understanding and the understanding of others. Financed primarily by the national and regional governments, the Frac were designed to disseminate culture outside France's capital, raising awareness of the art of our time among the broadest possible public. The Frac are charged with establishing a collection of contemporary French and international art in each region and disseminating it locally, nationally and internationally through the projects they implement. Each Frac has an identity, a collection, and a program of activities that lend it its specific character. Each

collection designs programming around its holdings and exhibitions that inspire discovery and dialog.

Catalogs, books and periodicals expand these dialogs and share the work of artists with a broader audience. Today the Frac own a collection of more than 22,000 works of outstanding quality and great diversity by artists representative of the French and the international contemporary art scene. **Platform** is an association created in 2005 by the Frac to pool their resources and their collections, and to work together on collaborative projects both in France and abroad—such as *Spatial City*—thus bolstering their impact and effect. “The selection of works in *Spatial City* demonstrates the breadth and acuity of the Frac collections, which combine a deep commitment to French culture with a broad approach to collecting contemporary art,” observes Frank. “Each Frac has its own curatorial vision, realized through its collection and programming, and when they are taken together, as this exhibition demonstrates, they form a more complete picture of contemporary art than most single museums can provide. To overlook the contemporary art of France and its diaspora is now to miss an essential facet of world culture.”

Artists in the exhibition include: Lida Abdul, Élisabeth Ballet, Yves Béloge, Berdaguer & Péjus, Baja Bajevic & Emanuel Licha, Katinka Bock, Monica Bonvicini, Jeff Carter, Maurizio Cattelan/Philippe Parreno, Jordi Colomer, François Dallegret, Peter Downsbrough, Philippe Durand, Jimmie Durham, Simon Faithfull, Didier Fuiza Faustino, Cao Fei, Robert Filliou, Elise Florenty, YonaFriedman, Dora Garcia, Séverine Hubard, Stefan Kern, Bertrand Lamarche, Vincent Lamouroux, Didier Marcel, François Morellet, Sarah Morris, Juan Muñoz, Stéphanie Nava, Philippe Ramette, Kristina Solomoukha, Tatiana Trouvé, Marie Voignier, herman de vries, Clemens von Wedemeyer, Stephen Wetzell, Raphaël Zarka and others. In keeping with Yona Friedman’s mutable design concepts—“mobile architecture” and “spatial cities”—the exhibition will add region-specific artists as it moves from Milwaukee, to Chicago, to Detroit. The presentation in Detroit includes the work of Detroit-based artist Ben Hall (b. 1977) in his first museum exhibition and Paris-based artist Katinka Bock (b. 1976), who will be in residence at MOCAD during the summer to produce site-specific artworks for the exhibition.

The project ***Spatial City: An Architecture of Idealism*** was developed in partnership with Platform (Regroupement des Fonds régionaux d’art contemporain, France) and was supported in part by Culturesfrance-French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, the French Ministry of Culture and Communication (Délégation Générale de la Création Artistique-service des arts plastiques), the Cultural Services of the French Embassy. Katinka Bock’s residency is made possible with the support of Étant-Donnés, the French American Cultural Exchange (FACE). Additional support is generously provided by Jane and Edward Schulak.



Hyde Park **ARTCENTER**

