

Program of events for *Spatial City* All events are free and open to the public.

Exhibition Reception

Sunday, May 23, 3-5pm

On the Trail of a Disorderly Future: Tours of the Chicago Pedways

with Hui Min Tsen

Thursday, June 17, Tuesday, July 6, & Wednesday, July 21, 3pm (Tours last 90 minutes)

Please RSVP to: Exhibitions@hydeparkart.org

Discussion: *What is a FRAC?*

Wednesday, June 23, 6pm

Marie-Ange Brayer Director of FRAC Centre, Philippe Durand, photographer represented in the Frac Collection, and other guests discuss the successes and challenges of the frac art institutional system.

Architecture/Engineering Ideas Exchange

hosted by Open Hand Studio

Tuesday, June 29, 6-8pm

This meet-and-match event links architecture and engineering professionals with non-profit organizations in need of design services.

Artist-in-Residence Open Studio

July 8, 6 pm

Paris-based photographer Philippe Durand presents his work and upcoming projects in the 2nd floor studio.

Social Structures: Buildings that create relationships

Sunday, July 11, 3pm

Brandy Savarese, editorial director for the Center for American Places at Columbia College Chicago that publishes architectural/landscape studies, will discuss how architecture can facilitate human interaction.

Talk with the Artists

Sunday, August 8, 3 pm

Join the artists Jeff Carter and Sara Schnadt with Allison Peters Quinn for a question and answer session generated by audience members.



Hyde Park **ARTCENTER**

5020 South Cornell Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60615 773.324.5520 www.hydeparkart.org

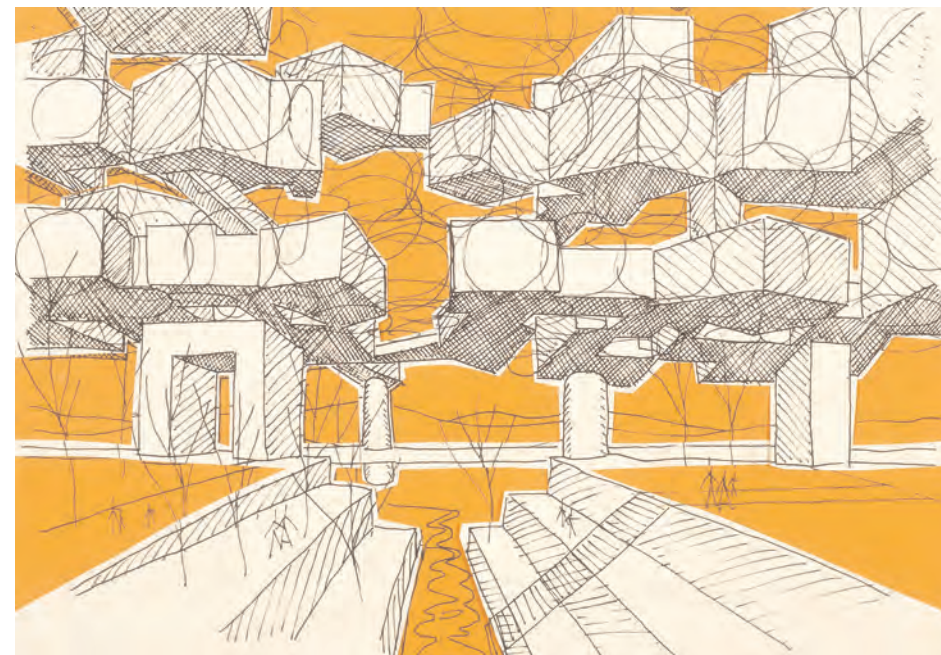
The Hyde Park Art Center is a not-for-profit organization that presents innovative exhibitions, primarily work by Chicago-area artists, and educational programs in the visual arts for children and adults of diverse backgrounds. The Center is funded in part by 3Arts, Alphawood Foundation; Boeing; a City Arts III grant from the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and the Illinois Arts Council; Creative New Zealand; Harper Court Arts Council; The Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; The Leo S. Guthman Fund; The Irving Harris Foundation; Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; JPMorgan Chase Foundation; The Mayer & Morris Kaplan Family Foundation; The MacArthur Foundation; The MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince; The Orbit Fund; Polk Bros. Foundation; The Clinton Family Fund; The Wallace Foundation; and the generosity of its members and friends.

Hyde Park **ARTCENTER**

Gallery 1

May 23-August 8, 2010

Spatial City: An Architecture of Idealism



Yona Friedman, *Ville spatiale*, 1959-60. collage, 8 x 10 inches,
Photography: Francois Lauginie. Collection Frac Centre.

Touring Dates:

Institute of Visual Arts in the Peck School of the Arts
at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
February 5 - April 18, 2010

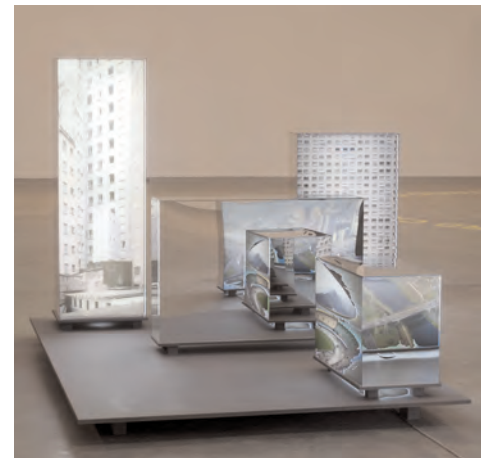
Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit
September 10 - December 26, 2010

1. "Touch the ground, occupying a minimal surface area.
2. Be easily broken down and moved
3. Be transformable at will by the individual inhabitant" (Yona Friedman)

These were the guidelines set out by architect **Yona Friedman**. Originally from Budapest (1923), and later a Parisian citizen, Friedman is most known for his 1958 manifesto *Mobile Architecture*. In his writing, Friedman speaks idealistically about architecture that is designed to enhance the inhabitant's sense of freedom. His theoretical structures (not actually realized) relate to the organic forms of Buckminster Fuller more than the rigid glass skyscrapers of Mies Van Der Rohe and Bauhaus design dominant in Chicago. The drawings exhibited here by Friedman, titled *Villes Spatiales* or *Spatial Cities* present the conceptual framework the curator, Nicholas Frank, used to select all the other artworks in the exhibition. The work of each artist selected reveals some relationship to architecture, whether intentional, oblique, critical, celebratory or incidental, and presents the spectrum of hope and despair associated with the ever evasive utopic city.

As the exhibition begins with Friedman's drawings of cities raised to the air, it figuratively ends with **Didier Marcel's** *Sans Titre (labours 4)*, a large-scale direct cast of freshly-turned earth. Marcel's work aims to upset the notion of monumentality while raising a piece of mundane earth onto the wall. Suggestively pregnant with the possibility of new life but frozen in its state of display, the piece hovers in a purposeful state of philosophical ambiguity.

Other artists in the show inhabit various points along this earthiness/pie-in-the-sky spectrum. **Kristina Solomoukha** layers the uninhabited, unused but nevertheless never-empty spaces of and around large cities. Her constructions, and "cities of the continuous present," question the countering values of use and disuse, and whether non-dwelling spaces really exist outside of the continuum of habitation. Despite the abject-ness of her subject, her attempted reintegration of "no man's land" back into active consideration signals hope for the future. More cynically, **Jordi Colomer** (video work in the 2nd floor screening room) confronts the looming carcasses of 1960s-era utopian housing projects with absurdity and humor. Using distortions of visual scale, he marches barely-crafted cardboard models of various buildings in front of their actual sites. Lofted on sticks like protest posters, these models convey the tragedy of failed intentions. Also, **Philippe Ramette** presents a confusing symbol of community in *Objet Cynique*, a four-person electric chair that allows a close-knit group to enter the afterlife together, if painfully. Hope and death are fused together as one by massive electric shock.



Kristina Solomoukha, *Shedding Identity (identit é permutable)*, 2005-6. Plexiglass, mirror, neon, digital printing on adhesive: FRAC Pays de la Loire

imaginary sense of rising without the stairs to actually do so. In reducing the monumental Arc de Triomphe to a size meant for personal use inside a modest home, **Jimmie Durham** at once democratizes national achievement, while shrinking it down to a feeble scale. This confusing signal questions whether we are better off as individuals or accomplish more with collective effort, and considers potential destructiveness fully in that equation. Likewise, the cardboard-box *Temple* of **Elisabeth**

With *Banister with White Wall*, **Juan Muñoz** offers a succinct summary of the American dream as experienced in reality by many: an

Ballet both exalts and diminishes a Romanesque monument by making a grand architectural gesture with a simple material. The piece recalls the "architecture" of homelessness without reducing social neglect to a joke or an after-thought.

Lida Abdul's monumental video in Gallery 1, *What we saw upon awakening* records the struggle of Afghani citizens to relieve a bomb-scarred building of its status as a ruin by pulling down the remaining walls by hand, with rope. This poetic, meta-physical meditation considers building as the act of making human destructiveness absent. The emptiness of an unbuilt world might stand for peace. With *In Part a Treatment of Success*, (video upstairs) **Stephen Wetzel** documents the daily efforts of a Midwesterner to sell dome homes, one of the few more or less popularized versions of radical architecture to make it to the market. Wetzel's work mirrors the subject of the piece -- the difficulties any utopian vision faces as it confronts pragmatic reality.



Didier Marcel, *Sans titre (labours 4)*, 2006, colored acrylic resin, steel, polyester, resin, glass fiber, varnished stained wood frame: FRAC Bourgogne.

As a nod to Friedman's model of "mobile architecture," each exhibition venue adapts the exhibition to suit the location. While in Chicago the exhibition features the work of Chicago-based artists **Sara Schnadt**, **Jeff Carter** and **Hui Min Tsen** and Detroit artist **Ben Hall**. These are the most current works presented in the show - all being made in 2009/2010 and prove that pathways through and around the built and virtual environment are in constant negotiation. *Network* by **Schnadt** is a site specific work that visualizes the endless intersections or hubs that exist, linking people through the internet. She presents the world wide web as a neon landscape extending beyond the gallery walls for infinity whether we like it or not.

The optimistic spirit of Yona Friedman's architectural ideas lives on in the work of **Didier Fiuzza Faustino**, a conceptually-driven architect who engages real built environments and the idea-based realm of art co-equally. In installations and computer-based projects, Faustino considers how media technologies create interstitial architectures that run through walls to connect people across time- and spatially-limited boundaries. Faustino's *One Meter Square House* design references the utopian architecture of the 1960s while radically reducing it to human scale, a potential critique of the unplanned urbanization that festers at the edges of many major international cities. Like Friedman before him, Faustino refuses to elevate even the monumentally-scaled architecture of today above the individuals who are destined to inhabit it.

Spatial City: An Architecture of Idealism features works mostly from the French Regional Contemporary Art funds (or the Frac). These collections, administrated by the regional governments and established in 1983, are charged with collecting contemporary French and international art in each region of France. The Frac helps make these art works accessible to the public for all of France's 22 regions, and now they are being made available to us here in the Midwest. This exhibition is the FIRST time these works have been shown together in the United States.

*This text features excerpts from the curatorial statement for *Spatial City* by Nicholas Frank.