

## *Not Los Angeles*

Curated by Zachary Kaplan and Aandrea Stang

September 26 - November 28, 2009 (Opening Sept. 26<sup>th</sup>. 7-9pm)

Presented as part of

THE FELLOWS OF CONTEMPORARY ART

KITTY CHESTER SERIES OF CURATOR'S LABORATORY

PROJECTS

*Thirty-Four Years of Support for Contemporary Art in California*

The Fellows of Contemporary Art (FOCA) announces the third exhibit in our recently rededicated Kitty Chester Series of Curator's Laboratory Projects entitled *Not Los Angeles* and curated by Zachary Kaplan and Aandrea Stang.

Unique in both its assertiveness and the breadth of its proliferation, Los Angeles has attracted a genre of scholarship from Reyner Banham to Mike Davis, from ecologies to fortresses, that exists to divine the city's essential meaning. While this has produced images both laudatory and critical of parking lots, production studios, mid-century property, and more, *Not Los Angeles* suggests a new way of thinking about the city-- ignoring its structures, its boundaries, and collective identities, spurning the meta-narratives, forgetting the things read, and focusing on the individual perspectives and intimate interactions that constitute this inhabited general space. Engaging the exhibition's participating artists in a reflective activity rather than a traditional display of bodies of work unified by an overarching theme, the goal of *Not Los Angeles* is to present decentralized vignettes, not a singular argument.

Six Los Angeles-based artists-- Lita Albuquerque, Brian Boyer, Alexandra Grant, Todd Gray and Kyungmi Shin, and Joel Kyack (themselves a constellation of artistic production throughout the city)-- will populate the FOCA exhibition space with individual "maps" designed to guide visitors around their estimation of a Los Angeles. The artists were asked to select a few locations--parks, stores, restaurants, monuments, museums, malls, whatever else-- that they felt defined their lived city and from their selections create some sort of guide. The combined results, rendered through dioramas, photography and photo-collage, projection, text, and drawing, present a varied city dense and disparate, walked, biked and driven, seen and heard, undefinable.

In addition, each of the artists will, throughout the exhibition's run, present a unique public project reflective of the images of Los Angeles in their work. A schedule of public events on the exhibition website, [notlosangeles.tumblr.com](http://notlosangeles.tumblr.com), which also features documentation of the work, maps of the locations referred to within the project, and more.

Finally, a key aspect of the exhibition is an archive of ephemera related to each individual project. The curators and the artists invite the public to submit their own photographs taken or materials gathered from their visit to the sites referred to by each of the artists. The archive will be a public resource maintained by FOCA and online and will constitute a permanent record of *Not Los Angeles'* journeys throughout the city.

### **Lita Albuquerque**

Identifying the palm tree as the symbol of Los Angeles, Lita Albuquerque will chose two trees and chart, through still photography to be animated for the exhibition, their relationships to the sun and the stars over a 24-hour period. She will lead both a sunrise tour of a 133-acre plot of land overlooking the Pacific and a nighttime tour of the Leonid meteor showers.

Lita Albuquerque, who was born in 1946, is at the forefront of the generation of the celebrated California Light and Space and Ephemeral Installation artists who emerged during the 1970s. She has exhibited around the world and has major public works in the USA, Japan, Egypt, the UAE, and Canada. Her ephemeral installations have been seen in locations as diverse as the Washington Monument, the Pyramids of Giza, and the Ross Ice Shelf on Antarctica. Lita has been awarded several highly coveted international grants and fellowships for her sculpture, installations, and paintings and in 1996 she won the prestigious Cairo Biennale Prize. She has exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, The Metropolitan Museum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Getty, and The Whitney Museum of American Art.

### **Brian Boyer**

Repurposing Los Angeles' quintessential auto-touring reference, The Thomas Guide, Brian Boyer's *A New Atlas (may also be referred to as: A Collection of Bicycle Routes Throughout Southern California, or Los Angeles Reconsidered: By Bicycle)* will examine the many ways cyclists traverse the region. Generating content by inviting cyclists to detail their preferred routes and courses, Boyer seeks to investigate and celebrate a culture and to bolster a sustainable method of maneuvering the urban environment. In addition, Boyer will lead a group bike ride exploring some of these routes.

Brian Boyer is a Southern California native and has been actively involved in the arts community since 1996. He was a founding member of Edward Giardina Contemporary Art, a five year curatorial partnership in Santa Ana, California. His work has been exhibited throughout Southern California and has been included in various international exhibitions, including *Miniature*, at Ginza-Kyubidou Gallery, Tokyo, Japan and *Self-Service Painting, Five Years*, London, England. In addition to his efforts to maintain a healthy studio practice, he was also a principal member of the artist collective Finishing School. Their exhibitions include: *The Patriot Library*, Lucky Tackle, Oakland, California; *Saturday School*, New York University, New York, New York; *PSA*, The Office, Huntington Beach, California; *Today It's Voluntary*, Huntington Beach Art Center, Huntington Beach, California; and *re-image*, Remote Lounge, New York, New York. Brian currently lives and works in Long Beach, California.

### **Alexandra Grant**

*5 Senses/East 107th Street* stems from Alexandra Grant's studio practice of collaborating with writers and her ongoing work with the Watts House Project. Grant has asked five Los Angeles-based writers to choose one of the senses (touch, taste, sight, smell, or hearing) as a starting point describe the block of East 107th Street across from the Watts Towers. The resulting project will create a literary and sensory map of the block from five different voices. A reading at the location will occur during the exhibition's run.

Alexandra Grant is a text-based artist who uses language and networks of words as the basis for her work in painting, drawing and sculpture. Her work has been the subject of shows at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, the Contemporary Museum (Baltimore), and galleries in the US and abroad. Grant has explored ideas of translation, identity, and dis/location not only in drawings, painting and sculpture, but also in conversation with other artists and writers, such as her current collaborator, hypertext author Michael Joyce, and the philosopher Hélène Cixous. Grant's work maps language in different media: from intricate wire filigree sculptures to large scale drawing/paintings on paper. She investigates translation not only from language to language, but also from text to image, spoken language to written word, and representations in two dimensions to three dimensional objects. Some of the basic queries that fuel her work are: How do we "read" and "write" images? How does language place us? What is the role of the hand in a world dominated by electronic communication?

Grant is currently at work on a public art collaboration with Watts House Project in Los Angeles, an artist-driven redevelopment of the homes across the street from Watts Towers. She is also preparing a second solo show with Honor Fraser Gallery in 2010.

### **Todd Gray and Kyungmi Shin**

Todd Gray and Kyungmi Shin will present a mapping project of their neighborhood of West Blvd between Florence and Slauson in Inglewood. The project will map the 15 block span focusing on the churches, liquor stores, artist studios and convalescent homes investigating these enterprises' role in formation and alteration of perception and consciousness.

Todd Gray attended Cal Arts in the late 1970s and in the late 1980s returned to receive his MFA working primarily with Allan Sekula. Gray's work explores and transmogrifies his experience of pop culture and imagery into a dark and conceptually challenging vision. Fluent in cultural iconography, driven by introspection, and steeped in issues of corporate politics and racial identity, Todd Gray's photo-based works are challenging in almost every sense of the word. Recent exhibitions include Brooklyn Museum of Art, The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Smithsonian Anacostia Museum and Center for African American History, the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago, Houston Center for Photography, California Museum of Photography, and Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art. Gray maintains studios in Inglewood, California and Akwidaa, Ghana.

Kyungmi Shin is an installation artist whose work weaves the language of sculpture, photography, painting and video. She studied at San Francisco Art Institute and received her MFA at UC Berkeley. She has exhibited at Sonje Museum in Korea, Southern Exposure in San Francisco, Asian American Art Center in New York, Laguna Beach Museum, Torrance Art Museum, Virginia University Art Museum, and Berkeley Art Museum. She is a recipient of the California Community Foundation emerging artist grant, City of Pasadena, Cultural Affairs Individual Artist grant, City of Los Angeles Artist in Residence grant, and Durfee grant. Her solo installation, "Babel: The Chaos of Melancholy" is on view at Pitzer Galleries in Claremont through September 11, 2009. Kyungmi Shin works and lives in Inglewood and Ghana.

### **Joel Kyack**

Joel Kyack's *Errquake* will investigate the unsteady terrain upon which Los Angeles is built. With earthquake activity as a jump-off, Kyack will investigate seismic shifts

from both a scientific and cultural viewpoint. This effort will culminate in a sculptural “map” of the region, balancing the perceived “negative” destructive qualities of fault line activity on architecture with the magnificent realignment of mass and the creation of physical space both above and below the earth’s surface. In addition to his sculpture, Kyack will be leading a trip to the San Andreas Fault in early October.

Joel Kyack was born in Pennsylvania. He received his BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1995 and his MFA from the University of Southern California in 2008. He participated in the 2008 California Biennial at the High Desert Test Sites and was a 2009 resident at The MacDowell Colony. Kyack currently lives and works in Los Angeles.