

For Immediate Release Please

ROAD TO UTOPIA LEADS TO 7 + FIG:

ARTS > BROOKFIELD PROPERTIES PRESENTS
VISUAL ART EXHIBITION *BUILDING PARADISE*
PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO PROJECTION, MULTI-MEDIA INSTALLATION,
DRAWING, ANIMATION, SCULPTURE AND PERFORMANCE
6 ARTISTS / 4 TEAMS
FREE AT 7+FIG ART SPACE APRIL 10 - MAY 29

LOS ANGELES – *Building Paradise*, a group exhibition curated by artist Kyungmi Shin, will use photography, video, multi-media, drawing, animation, sculpture and performance art from six individual artists and four collaborative teams to explore the ideals of paradise and utopia. *Building Paradise* opens Friday, April 10, at noon and runs through May 29 at 7+FIG Art Space, 735 South Figueroa Street (corner of Seventh and South Figueroa streets). The exhibition and the performances are free.

Building Paradise will show a fantastical, optimistic and whimsical imaginary world and the challenge of building a paradise or a utopia in reality.

Special events include performances in conjunction with the Downtown Art Walk, Thursdays, April 9 and May 14, at 6:00pm - 9:00pm.-

The individual artists participating in *Building Paradise* are Todd Gray, Christine Nguyen, Guan Rong, Julie Shafer, Jen Liu and Myriam Thyes. The artist teams are Liz Glynn & Mariechen Danz, Amy Green & Kyungmi Shin, Jen Liu & Marte Eknaes and Marc Frohn & Ilaria Mazzoleni.



Inhabiting the Dream, HH 2100, a large-scale photo montage by Marc Frohn and Ilaria Mazzoleni envisions the Hollywood Hills in the year 2100 is part of *Building Paradise*.

"Paradise is an elusive term," said Ms. Shin. "Originally the word referred to an artificially -- created environment protected from the harsh nature outside. Paradise in contemporary society refers to the same notion as the original idea of an artificially created world -- a tropical paradise, a vacation in an idyllic landscape, a get-away from day-to-day responsibilities -- is a construction of the mind, an escape from reality."

Six of the nine works in *Building Paradise* are new and created specifically for this exhibition.

ART & ARTISTS

Liz Glynn and Mariechen Danz

object lesson: house of song, walled garden, island in the sea

2009

Mixed media installation

Liz Glynn and Mariechen Danz will create a collaborative installation called *object lesson: house of song, walled garden, island in the sea*, made of plaster tablets and fragments with images and bits of text related to the idea of paradise as paradox. Paradise represents a state of possibility, and yet all modern conceptions view it as a lost state of being, no longer visible. These tablets will have a kind of "tabula rasa" feel. Each tablet would have the physical weight of an object like a Rosetta Stone; some would contain fragments of text, while others would hold images of an imagined paradise, including photographic images of nature and palm trees, historical paintings describing paradise, and fragments from diverse cultural sources and times of theoretical and literary texts about paradise. See description of accompanying performance below.

Todd Gray

Afrotronicos. Afrotronic. Afrotronische. Afrotronique. Afrotronisk.

2009

Digital photography

Todd Gray will present a photo collage installation created from African jungle landscapes and portraits manipulated by digital noise and abstraction. The images of nature are disfigured and "modernized" by the introduction of digital noise and fluorescent colors. The piece elegantly speaks to the introduction and influence of the West on African cultures.

Amy Green and Kyungmi Shin

Rebuilt

2009

Multi-media Installation with Video

Amy Green and Kyungmi Shin will present a sculptural installation entitled *Rebuilt*. Using construction materials such as wood, Plexiglas panels, paint and tape, in addition to multimedia effects including video and photography, they will create an imaginary landscape

inspired by sci-fi movies, manga (the Japanese word for comics and graphic novels), and utopian architecture. Bringing together static and moving imagery, Green and Shin will create a fantastical world that is in flux and in-between states of being built and deconstructed. Their installation plays with a notion of a paradise that is part imaginary and part real that allows for entropy and flux in isolated or fixed systems.

Jen Liu and Matre Eknaes

Fun To Be Thirsty

2009

Multimedia installation

Jen Liu will present a collaborative work with London-based artist Marte Eknaes. An ongoing project looking into the nature of dissemblance, they will look at the correspondences between WW I dazzle ships, the Colalife Initiative, and method acting. Visual, historical and conceptual lines will be drawn between the elements in a wall-based piece, combining research materials and a combination of drawn and found materials. For instance, saving children's lives through sneaking life-saving drugs into shipments of Coca Cola in Colalife Initiative, saving sailors' lives through op-art in Dazzle ships, and sustaining the "life" of the fictional stage/film character in method acting are the elements explored in their installation.

Jen Liu

The Brethren of the Stone: Comfortably Numb

Video Projection

Jen Liu will present the video *The Brethren of the Stone: Comfortably Numb*. The video is part of a series based on an imaginary brotherhood, "Brethren of the Stone." The first in a trilogy, *Comfortably Numb* describes the journey of a novice presented as a musical, with the characters singing the lyrics of Pink Floyd's *Comfortably Numb* in Latin and medieval style melodies and chants composed by Zach Layton.

Christine Nguyen

Humming of A Symphony

2009

Photography

Christine Nguyen will create a site-specific photo-mural for *Building Paradise*. The artist states, "My work imagines that the depths of the ocean reach into outer space, that through an organic prism, vision can fluctuate between the micro- and macroscopic. I have been developing a personal cosmology in which commonalities among species, forms, and environment become visible and expressive, suggesting past narratives and possible futures. The forms and environs in my work sometimes migrate into new pieces, establishing new systems. These systems imagine modes of transportation, communication, and regeneration. There are no waste materials in these worlds: vision is a renewable resource."

Guan Rong

129,600

2009

Mixed media Installation

Guan Rong's large-scale interactive installation is titled *129,600*, directly adapted from *Journey to the West*. It is a fictional account of a Buddhist monk's pilgrimage to India during the Tang dynasty to obtain Buddhist religious texts called Sutras. The installation draws an intuitive mindset from "Happy land of the mountain of flowers and fruit" and "cave Heaven of the water curtain," where the Monkey King or "Great Sage Equal to Heaven," one of the monk's protectors, was transformed from a rock and lived for about 400 years. Through the discovery of "origin," this installation creates an extended metaphor that searching for the individual journeying toward spiritual enlightenment is far beyond beautiful mountain paradise.

Julie Shafer

Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island 1868-2006

Photography

Julie Shafer will present *Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island 1868-2006*, a series of photographs that depict Mackinac Island's posh resort, which strives to recreate the colonial era. The hotel's staff, comprised almost entirely of African-Americans, is dressed in colonial attire. There is no tipping allowed and the guests are made up primarily of wealthy families. This series of photographs questions the notion of "whose paradise is it?" where the setting is meant to provide a nostalgic glamour for those who are blind to the metaphoric significance of such a setting. The photographs focus not only on the history of the building, but also the simulacrum of that history.

Myriam Thyes

Flag Metamorphoses

Digital animation

A participatory art project organized by artist Myriam Thyes. *Flag Metamorphoses* is a set of 33 animations with many authors. The flags transform into each other through flash animation. Between each two flags, scenes appear that show a relation between the two countries -- an exploration into the meaning of imagery on flags and other national symbols. *Flag Metamorphoses* lays stress on the relations between nations as changing ones: only in the permanent re-creation of values, symbols and ways of life, in mixing with others and differing from others, identities, cultures and societies stay alive. Each artist who creates a flag animation expresses such a relation in his/her own way.

Marc Frohn and Ilaria Mazzoleni

Inhabiting the Dream, HH 2100

2009

Architectural Model

Marc Frohn and Ilaria Mazzoleni will present *Inhabiting the Dream, HH 2100*. Their large-scale photo montage envisions the



Flag Metamorphoses is a set of 33 animations with many authors organized by artist **Myriam Thyes**

Hollywood Hills in the year 2100, in which climate change and meteorological shifts have given birth to a new architecture. The team foresees a liberation of the hills, allowing them to evolve, dissolve and reconfigure themselves, while the Angelinos will finally inhabit their dream: THE SIGN.

Performance, April 9, 6:00pm

The term Afro-Electonica best describes the multimedia performance collaboration of Pablo Manzarek and Todd Gray, the result of their of West African polyrhythms and digital media. The artists create a dense electronic and acoustic jungle soundscape with live African drumming, keyboards, white noise and sound loops that trigger highly processed video images of the landscape and a contemporary Ghanaian portrait. Mr. Manzarek is an accomplished musician and composer, has toured internationally and has a background in Afro-Cuban drumming. Mr. Gray is a visual artist working out of both Los Angeles and Ghana, and has studied with a variety of Ghanaian master drummers.

Performance, May 14, 6:00pm

object lesson: house of song, walled garden, island in the sea by Liz Glynn and Mariechen Danz culminates in a performance piece by the artists using chant, movement and action. The performance will enact clichés of paradise in order to understand our current skepticism of the idea.

Kyungmi Shin was born in Korea in 1963. She received her M.F.A. in sculpture and installation at the University of California at Berkeley in 1995. Ms. Shin 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, Korean American Museum, and Virginia University Art Museum. She is a recipient of emerging artist Brodi grant from California Community Foundation in 2001, Individual Artist Grant from Pasadena City in 2003 and Artist in Residence Grant from City of Los Angeles in 2006 and 2007.

Last year, Brookfield Properties expanded its arts mission from its World Financial Center in New York City to 7+FIG, including a new venue for visual and performing arts in downtown Los Angeles, 7+FIG Art Space. Brookfield Properties now produces and commissions works of art for the public spaces of its commercial properties in the United States and Canada.

"***Building Paradise*** is one more example of Brookfield's arts mission to create opportunities for artists and the public to get together," said Debra Simon, Executive and Artistic Director of Arts World Financial Center and head of the national expansion of Brookfield's arts program. "Our programs, which have worked for twenty-one years in New York, are now expanded to downtown L.A."

"Bringing its long term commitment to the arts to downtown LA, Brookfield Properties has forged a relationship with the City of Los Angeles's Department of Cultural Affairs and other area arts organizations," said Olga Garay, Executive Director of the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs. "The goal of the partnership is to expand opportunities for LA artists, audiences and visitors to revel in contemporary visual and performing arts. An outstanding example of corporate commitment to the arts, Brookfield Properties has not only invested its own resources but leveraged millions of dollars in the communities where it is based - all in an effort to make the arts part of the urban landscape. The DCA is thrilled to be part of this enlightened public-private collaboration as we believe it will serve as a model for future partnership opportunities to promote the arts."

The information number for 7+FIG is (213) 955-7150 and the web site is <www.7fig.com>. 7+FIG, shopping center, offers open-air shopping, dining and entertainment at 735 South Figueroa Street (corner of Seventh and Figueroa streets).

Building Paradise is presented by arts > Brookfield Properties and sponsored by Brookfield Properties. All presentations are in partnership with the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs.

Brookfield Properties brings life to its public spaces through an internationally acclaimed visual and performing arts program. We also fulfill our commitment to local artists and performers by commissioning original works and presenting art forms in new and unusual spaces.

03/31/09

-30-

Visual Art & Performance

BUILDING PARADISE

April 10 - May 29

Monday-Friday, 12-4 pm

Two Free Performances: April 9 and May 14, 6:00pm -- 9:00 pm

7+FIG Art Space located at 7+FIG Shopping Center, 735 South Figueroa Street, Los Angeles
INFO (213) 955-7150 and www.7fig.com