

NEW OBSERVATIONS

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Out of the Box

The Way of Art on the Loose

ARTLANTIC

Super Storm Sandy hit Atlantic City full force a few weeks before *was scheduled to open its Art Park to the community. Sandy devastated portions of the Caribbean, the Mid-Atlantic and Northeastern United States in late October 2012. The ARTLANTIC projects were very fortunate and rode out the storm virtually unscathed. Many residents of Atlantic City, however, were not so lucky including those we've come to know through our projects. The super storm affected many families, homes and businesses in the community and through the collective efforts of government, relief organizations, and volunteers our community is getting back on it's feet. We hope for a speedy recovery and that the ARTLANTIC parks may add a little bit of felicity in their lives and become an area of respite for the city.*



Layman Lee

Transforming Atlantic City in a Five Year Public Art Campaign with LANCE FUNG

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ARTLANTIC
WONDER

FOR A TOWN OF LESS THAN 40,000

people, Atlantic City has always lived big in America's imagination. One of the oldest seaside resorts, it is home to the first and longest boardwalk, the game of Monopoly and the subject of the popular Boardwalk Empire. In March, I received a call from curator Lance Fung with the amazing offer to develop *ARTLANTIC*, a series of temporary art installations to transform vacant city blocks in America's Playground.

As a recent transplant, I came into Atlantic City not knowing much more than casinos and beaches. This quickly changed. Although this is a resort town, there is a very diverse population living here. As a second generation Brooklynite, I walk everywhere. I soon found myself attracted to the contrast of the grit of the city, the vacant blocks and boarded up Victorian homes with the new developments. I've grown to love the dense fog that sometimes shrouds the towering casinos, the surreal experience of lights, scents and sounds of the Boardwalk mixed with the ocean waves. I've stood looking up in wonder at night at the thousands of seagulls circling the bright towers like moving stars, feasting on the insects attracted to the casino lights.

I've learned Atlantic City is a city undergoing transformation and the landscape reflects this. The cityscape feels interrupted by large empty fields, as promising developments are stalled as vacant lots. These empty spaces are the sites of *ARTLANTIC*'s temporary parks and public art exhibitions. The first of the series, *ARTLANTIC: wonder*, is inspired by this urban terrain.

The first location on the demolished Sands casino, is a 7.05 acre site that will be converted into a lush green park. Impressing on the space, are two massive terraced, undulating grass mounds that also form an exhibition

ILYA & EMILIA KABAKOV
Devil's Rage, 2012
Ceder, galvanized nails, corten
steel straps, signboard, paint,
gold coins

ROBERT BARRY
Untitled, 2012
23 Fabricated channel letters.
Photo: Layman Lee

space for the artists **Robert Barry, Ilya and Emilia Kabakov** and **Kiki Smith**. On the exterior, conceptual artist Robert Barry will embed 2 foot tall words, some over 10 feet long, that are illuminated, colorful and abstract, composed to inspire and engage the viewer. On the interior, one chamber houses a 25 x 70 feet sunken pirate ship rising out of the sand by the Kabakov's, harkening to the shipwrecks along the coastline and Atlantic City's history. Opposite this installation is a red garden designed by Kiki Smith and Balmori Associates that will surround a bronze sculpture of a woman embracing a doe by Smith titled, "Her which alludes to subjects of nature, sex and femininity.

On a 8,500 square foot location next to the Ritz Carlton where the infamous Enoch "Nucky" Johnson lived, artist **John Roloff** has conceived of *Étude Atlantis*, consisting of an elaborate, illusionistic space in which bold linear stripes converge into a spiral pattern inspired by the landscape design of the first location. At the center of the pattern is an embedded, mirrored cistern in which water cascades over into the center. The location of this cistern is the antipode, or the direct location on the opposite side of the earth, providing a portal to the sea floor of the Indian Ocean off the southwest coast of Australia.

Though temporary, our goal for the art park was to not only transform these eyesores, but to create unique green spaces that would be a nexus for social engagement and a platform for the creative arts. Created through the collaborative efforts of artists, architects and landscape designers, we also needed to reach out to the communities who would use the park once it was completed. As a small team of the new kids in town (including John Talley, the Director of Operations and newest addition, Jamila Glapion, Assistant Director of Operations and the only local), we did the best thing we could think of to get to know our community — we threw a party. Or to be more exact, we threw a mixer.

We wanted to reach out to as many people as possible to present the project, but to discuss possibilities for involvement and collaborations, and to reach out to our neighbors, local artists and art organizations. Our first mixer was at the Absecon Lighthouse, New Jersey's tallest lighthouse in Atlantic City. At first it seemed as if I was reaching out within a vacuum. I was emailing and calling any arts organization, community boards, teachers, churches, local schools or libraries I could find. We were excited if ten people attended. The turn out blew us away. Over 70 members of this community showed up. There was standing room only during the presentation. Though Lance went over an hour, it seemed as if almost no one moved. Afterwards, audience members started asking how they could get involved, so we gathered names and

KIKI SMITH
Her, 2003
Patinated Bronze
Red Garden,
2012

I made a statue of a woman standing, holding a deer. The deer lays back on the woman's neck. There is no space between them. Her fur is against her skin. We are intimate animals. She is a red plant. Her eyes are diamond, exposed and clear.

~ Kiki Smith



formed our first team of volunteers.

That was months ago and our volunteers have become so much more. They have evolved into becoming our Atlantic City Advisory Committee. The members of this committee are our ambassadors and have given legs to our mission by multiplying our voice tenfold. Attendance at the last mixer at Dante Hall was almost doubled. These partnerships have also led to many wonderful collaborative projects. The construction industry unions are volunteering their time to assist with installation of the artwork on these sites. The painters' union apprentices are working with John Roloff to paint his complex spiral pattern. The carpenter's union is assisting the Kabakov's to erect the large wooden ship. The plumbers union has helped with the Balmori landscape design. Richard Stockton College graphic design students, working under the supervision of their teacher Michael McGarvey, are designing a mini catalogue that will be distributed for free at the sneak peak event in November. Additional students have also signed up to intern or volunteer their time to photograph the project or lend their graphic design skills to develop outreach material. Many Atlantic City and Atlantic County residents have told me that they heard a big art project was transforming their city and they wanted to be a part of that history.

In late August, a post on *Hyperallergic* caught my attention with a simple headline, "Art Makes You Nicer". It recalled a news release by the University of Illinois at Chicago announcing their recent study correlating survey responses to arts-related questions, to responses on altruistic actions — like donating blood, donating money, giving directions, or doing favors for a neighbor — that place the interests of others over the interests of self. What they found was that "even after controlling for age, race and education... participation in the arts, especially as audience, predicted civic engagement, tolerance and altruism". The outpouring of support from the residents of Atlantic City is first hand experience, proving that art can bring out great things in people. Regardless of the various agendas imposed on public art, its inherent most basic attribute is that it has the ability to transform the individuals and environment around them. We approached Atlantic City with what we wanted to build and they rolled up their sleeves.

ARTLANTIC, like many of Fung Collaboratives curatorial projects, is distinctive not only because art is created and exhibited on such a mass scale in public spaces, but because of its unique ability to bring all kinds of people together. *ARTLANTIC* is created through the efforts of the Atlantic City Alliance, the artists, architects, designers, carpenters, landscapers, local businesses and business associations, city agencies, universities, public schools, their teachers and more. The list keeps growing.



Courtesy Balmori Associates

This installation brings together light, space, and time. I like to take into consideration the situation of the words and their place—mood, weather, and the fact that people have to walk around to see the whole thing and physically partake in it. It becomes part of the environment, and hopefully people will be able to interact in an individual and personal way. My work is not isolated within galleries and museums but functions as part of an overall situation, with these ideas extending out into the world.

~ Robert Barry



ROBERT BARRY
Untitled, 2012
23 Fabricated channel letters. Lexan, aluminum, LEDs, steel plate, anchors.
Overall dimensions: 4 acres
Photo: Peter Tobia

This project has been a very interesting experiment for us. Atlantic City is not a place you might associate with public art, but definitely with “treasures.” And what could be better than discovery, the element of surprise, the thrill of finding a pirate ship? The dream of travel, adventure, and all the pirate stories—these are treasures of the past in today’s Atlantic City.

~ Emilia and Ilya Kabakov



ILYA & EMILIA KABAKOV, *Devil's Rage*, Drawing, 2012

Étude Atlantis is imagined as a visual instrument for the social and philosophical exercise of “finding Atlantis.” This project is inspired by a complex matrix of sources including: the work of the musician John Cage, the architect Arthur Erickson, the mathematician Ivars Peterson, the global position of Atlantic City, oceanography, renaissance church floor design and camouflage ship painting, among others. The antipode of Atlantic City, or direct line through the center of the earth, emerges from the sea floor off the SW coast of Australia, near the underwater Naturaliste Plateau, considered by some to be a southern Atlantis. Étude Atlantis presents to the participant a stage-like environment where participants may traverse and explore a gigantic graphic of illusionistic decent and a complimentary central “cistern” reflecting the sky above and conceptually that of it’s antipode. These visual elements can be imagined as a theatrical playground and puzzle-space to consider mythic quests, cognition and geopolitical relationships.

~ **John Roloff**

JOHN ROLOFF

Étude Atlantis, 2012

Plywood, paint, concrete, asphalt, mirror polished stainless steel sheets, aluminum, PVC piping, LED waterproof flexible light, misting system, water pump, mirror polished stainless steel uprights, stainless steel cable, turnbuckles

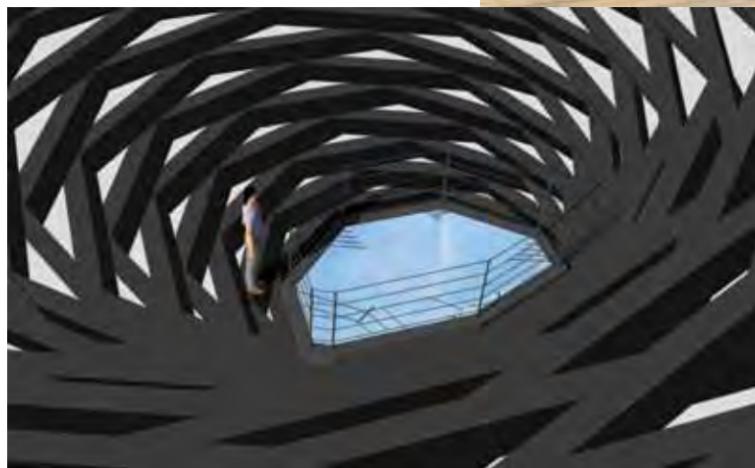
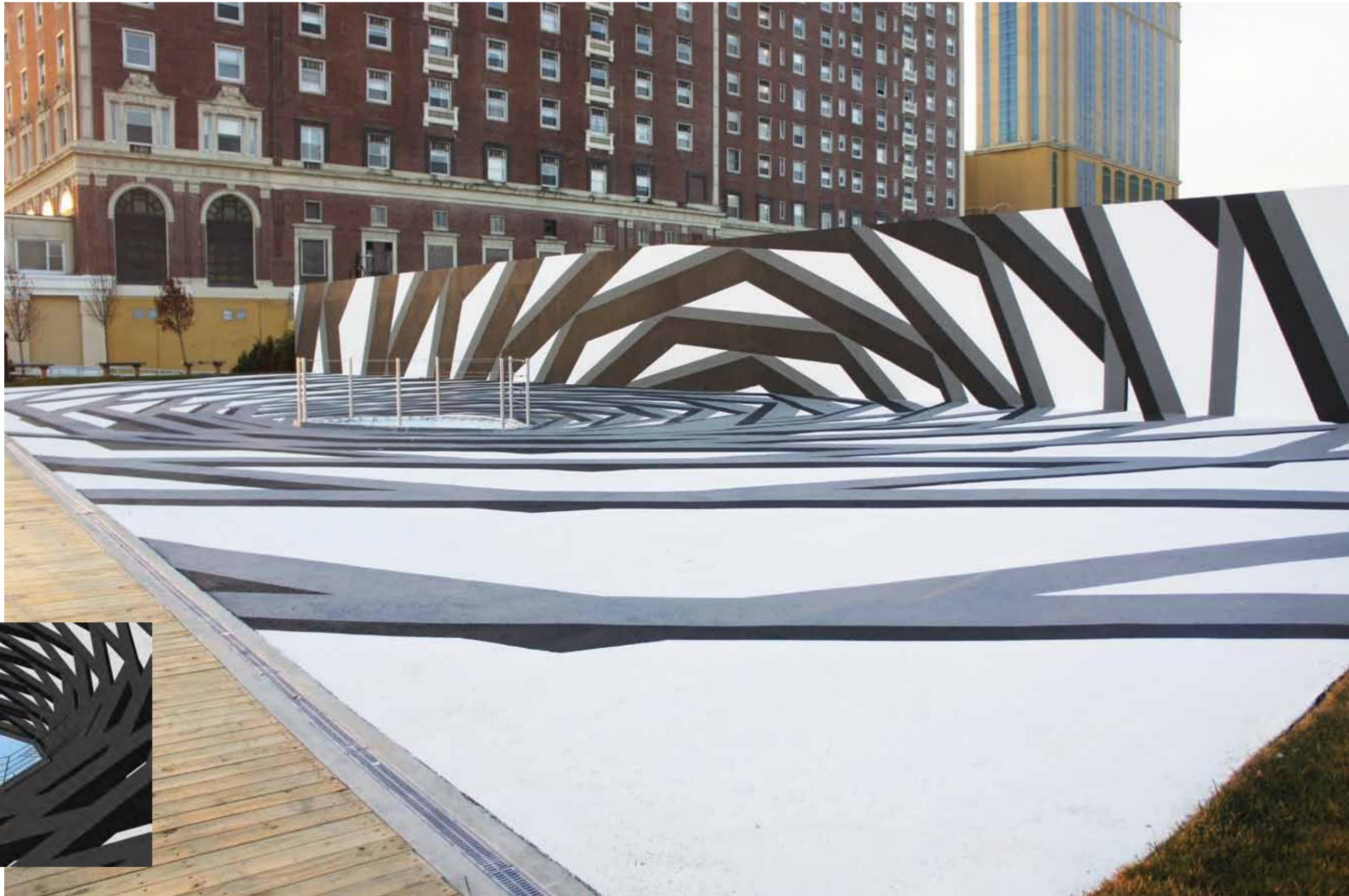


Photo: Layman Lee

contributor bios

ROBERT BARRY is one of the pioneers of the Conceptual movement, making work concerned with the immaterial nature of ideas. Barry’s art is based on the notion that the idea of an artwork is paramount to the finished product. Barry has worked in a variety of intangible media, such as electromagnetic fields, telepathic brainwaves, ultrasonic sound and invisible gases. Early in his career he famously observed that “Nothing seems to be the most important thing in the world.” Barry has been exhibited in hundreds of solo and group exhibitions and is included in the permanent collections of the world’s most visionary museums. Robert Barry lives and works in New Jersey.

MARK BLOCH a.k.a. Post Art Network (P.A.N.), is an American multi-media artist from Cleveland, Ohio. Since 1982 he has worked in New York City as a conceptual artist with and in the tradition of Dada, the Surrealists, Marcel Duchamp, the Fluxus and Ray Johnson. He became active with mail art in 1977 and created several international postal art, post-art games including the Last Mail Art Show.

BETSY BRECHT is a graphic designer who’s Art Director’s toolbox includes vast experience in Alaska (The Anchorage Daily News), New York (Walter Bernard & Milton Glaser Inc, TIME, Bloomberg) and Pennsylvania (Philadelphia magazine, Philadelphia University adjunct faculty). Once settled in the Philadelphia area she founded BB Design, a creative studio touching a broad range of clients.

JOSEPH CAIRONE has almost 40 years of experience as a practicing landscape architect with knowledge in all aspects of a project from conceptualization to implementation. Joe’s design is informed by travel along the Northeastern seaboard and Gulf Coasts. His approach to design lies in the respect of natural systems and native habitats, incorporating those characteristics into the built environment.

BUCKMINSTER FULLER Fuller was an American architect, author, designer and inventor. He developed architectural designs, including the widely known geodesic dome. Fuller was born on July 12, 1895, in Milton, Massachusetts and taught at Black Mountain College in North Carolina during the summers of 1948 and 1949 where he began work on the geodesic dome. He was later awarded the United States patents and popularized the structure. Fuller branded the word Dymaxion to abbreviate the term “dynamic maximum tension.”

LANCE FUNG has been curating large-scale public art exhibitions for decades, and his most recent project in Atlantic City promises to be his best. With his unique curatorial eye, Fung is transforming vacant lots into a much-needed park system. Fung has curated internationally recognized exhibitions such as “The Snow Show,” “Lucky Number Seven” for the seventh SITE Santa Fe International Biennial, and “Wonderland.” He has created important exhibitions such as Crossing Parallels at the SSamzi Space in Seoul, Korea; Going Home at the Edward Hopper Historical Museum in Nyack, New York; Revisiting Gordon Matta-Clark at Next: The Venice Architectural Biennale in Venice, Italy; The Ship of Tolerance by Ilya and Emilia Kabakov, in Siwa, Egypt; and The Snow Show: Venice at the 50th International Art Exhibition/La Biennale di Venezia. He is a member of the International Association of Curators of Contemporary Art (IKT).

GENERAL IDEA was formed in 1969 by **AA BRONSON, FELIX PARTZ** and **JORGE ZONTAL**. AA Bronson, born Michael Tims, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, 1946 -. Felix Partz, born Ronald Gabe, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, 1945-94. Jorge Zontal, born Slobodan Saia-Levy, Parma, Italy, 1944-94.

GAIA is a Baltimore-based international street artist, whose name stands for Earth Goddess, is known for using animal imagery to convey nature’s voice in urban landscapes. He was the curator of Open Walls Baltimore in which widely recognized street artists from around the world mounted an outdoor exhibition of extraordinary murals that enliven public spaces, stimulating community revitalization and national dialogue.

HANNAH HIGGINS is an American writer and academic living in Chicago, Illinois. She is a Professor in the Department of Art History at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Hannah Higgins is the twin daughter of the Fluxus artists, Dick Higgins and Alison Knowles. Her research examines various art historical subjects (visual, musical, computational and material) in terms of two philosophically and practically entwined terms, information and sensation.

JESSICA HIGGINS is based in New York City and Massachusetts practices whole art that explores metaphysics, through intermedia, installation, performance, action and process based work. She is the Creative Director of SWITCH, a nationally syndicated intermedia art series for public access television also streamed on the internet. Twin daughter of Fluxus Founders Dick Higgins and Alison Knowles she has has performed, since childhood, with its Founding members. A formally trained dancer, she performed with the Elaine Summers Company at Lincoln Center. She was recently a White House correspondent for Artist Organized Art.

EMILIA AND ILYA KABAKOV are Russian-born, American-based artists that collaborate on environments which fuse elements of the everyday with those of the conceptual. While their work is deeply rooted in the Soviet social and cultural context in which the Kabakovs came of age, their work still attains a universal significance. In 1993 they represented Russia at the 45th Venice Biennale with their installation The Red Pavilion. Their work has been shown at many of the world’s major museums and they have completed important public commissions throughout Europe, receiving the highest honors and awards. The Kabakovs live and work in Long Island.

ERIKA KNERR is an artist and publisher living and working in Western Massachusetts and New York. Her paintings, performance and installations have been included in one person and group exhibitions and festivals internationally. She is currently editorial director of Artist Organized Art, Inc. and the publisher of *New Observations* magazine.

ALISON KNOWLES is an American intermedia artist known for her soundworks, installations, performances, and publications. Knowles was very active in the Fluxus movement, and continues to create work inspired by her Fluxus experience. In 1963, Knowles produced one of the earliest book objects, a can of texts and beans called the Bean Rolls. In 2009 Knowles was an Artist-in-Residence at Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University.

LARRY MILLER is an intermedia artist whose work has been presented extensively in global venues since his first solo exhibition in New York in 1970. He was active in the development of performance-based works and multiple media installation art in SoHo’s earliest alternative spaces. He has been actively associated with Fluxus since 1969, and worked extensively with George Maciunas on diverse projects including Flux-Sports and the Flux-Labyrinth. He has organized numerous Fluxus performance events and festivals and is cofounder of the Larry Miller/Sara Seagull Archive.

LAYMAN LEE has worked with Lance Fung since 2003 and worked on The Snow Show in 2004, the Winter Olympic Snow Show in Torino, Italy 2006, SITE Sante Fe 2008 Biennial: Lucky Number Seven, and is currently Project Director for Artlantic an exciting five-year public art project to transform Atlantic City through the arts. A working artist herself, she holds a BA from Hunter College in Fine Art.

LEAH POLLER is an artist, curator and arts activist. In her 30 year career in the arts (20 spent in Paris, France), multi- cultural polyglot Poller has collaborated on the facsimile reprints of the major XXth Century art and literary magazines, curated more than 130 exhibitions in the US and abroad, directed the Art Alliance of Soho and its *Yin-Yang* Salon series, founded IACI, a Mexican American cultural association promoting restoration of the Guston - Kadish mural *The Inquisicion*, and written and lectured on art extensively. Trained as a sculptor, she has had a parallel career as an artist and has exhibited internationally. Poller lives and works in Harlem.

LUCIO POZZI is a painter, artist organizer and performance artist. After living a few years in Rome, where he studied architecture, he came to the United States in 1962, as a guest of the Harvard International Summer Seminar. He then settled in New York and took US citizenship. Having taught at Cooper Union, Yale Graduate Sculpture Program, Princeton University, the Maryland Institute College of Art and at the MFA and BFA programs of the School of Visual Arts, in New York, he now shares his time between his Hudson (NY) and Valeggio (Verona) studios. Lucio Pozzi is the Founder of *New Observations* Magazine and still serves on its Board.

JOHN ROLOFF is a visual artist who works conceptually with site, process and natural systems. He is known primarily for his outdoor kiln/furnace projects done from the late 1970’s to the early 1990’s as well as other large-scale environmental and gallery installations investigating geologic and natural phenomena. He studied geology at UC Davis with Professor Eldridge Moores, with Bob Arneson and William T. Wiley. He has received 3 artist’s visual arts fellowships from the NEA, a Guggenheim Foundation fellowship, a California Arts Council grant for visual artists and a Bernard Osher Fellowship at the Exploratorium in San Francisco, CA. He is currently Chair of the Sculpture/Ceramics Department the San Francisco Art Institute.

SARA SEAGULL has worked for more than 30 years as a graphic designer, creating print communications for cultural organizations, educational institutions, publishing firms and individual artists. She is also known for her work on Fluxus-related projects, including newspapers, exhibition catalogs, posters and artists’ stamps. She currently manages the Robert Watts Estate along with Larry Miller, has collaborated with him on numerous Fluxus events, and teaches Visual Communications at City University of New York (Baruch College). She is cofounder of the Larry Miller/Sara Seagull Archive.

JOSHUA SELMAN is an international artist and organizer practicing public space intervention, large scale installation, cultural-strategy, critical journalism and applied new media. Has made major works in sound, performance and objects. Is a noted Intermedia artist who worked extensively with Fluxus Founders Alison Knowles and Dick Higgins and debuted at Emily Harvey Gallery. Served as Executive Director of The International Artists Museum’s, New York Center. He founded the strategic non-profit Artist Organized Art and is key to the relaunch of New Observations Magazine. A Yale graduate, based in New York City, under varied identities has many followers in The Americas, Europe, Asia and beyond.

DAVID SHAPIRO is an American poet, literary critic, and art historian. He has written some twenty volumes of poetry, literary, and art criticism. Shapiro wrote the first monograph on John Ashbery, the first book on Jim Dine’s paintings, the first book on Piet Mondrian’s flower studies, and the first book on Jasper Johns’ drawings. He was first published at the age of thirteen, and his first book was published when he was just eighteen. Shapiro teaches poetry and literature at Cooper Union and is currently the William Paterson professor of art history at William Paterson

KIKI SMITH is an artist of international prominence whose career has spanned over three decades. She is a leading figure among artists addressing philosophical, social, and spiritual aspects of human nature. Her explorations of the human condition, the body, and the realms of spirituality and nature have resulted in works of exceptional power and beauty spanning mediums from sculpture and printmaking to installation and textiles. In 2006 TIME Magazine named her one of the “TIME 100: The People Who Shape Our World.” Kiki Smith lives and works in New York City.

ALEX STERN likes to think, work and dream between the architectures of space, technology and politics. He has enjoyed designing a modern cube house in the woods in Indiana, architecting and constructing a virtualized data center at UIC, and re-envisioning the dynamics of coffee-house politics. He lives and works in the Chicago area.

SARAH SZE is a contemporary artist whose signature sculptural aesthetic has presented ephemeral installations that penetrate walls, suspend from ceilings and burrow into the ground and uses ordinary objects to create sculptures and site-specific installations and is the United States Representative for the Venice Biennale, the 55th International Art Exhibition, in 2013. Her work Still Life With Landscape (Model for a Habitat) was installed on the High Line in Manhattan’s Chelsea neighborhood and received the AICA Award for Best Project in a Public Space. She lives and works in New York City.

LUCJA WASKO-MANDES lives in Warsaw and works as a curator and art historian. She has served as a director at the Lodz Biennale and the International Artists Museum. The daughter of Ryszard and Maria Wasko, she was born in Lodz in 1979. She has participated in many of the original Construction in Process events since childhood and witnessed the growth of the revolutionary series of international, self populating, artist organized exhibitions. She is currently moving to Berlin.

RYSZARD WASKO is an artist, curator, and organizer from Lodz Poland who in the 1970’s came to prominence as a conceptual artist and founded the forum “Archives of Contemporary Thought” was also a member of Workshop of the Film Form. In the 70’s participated in the XII São Paulo Art Biennial, Documenta 6, the Third International Festival of Independent Avant-garde Film in London, the Sydney Biennale, the XI Biennale de Paris, the V Biennale of Spatial Forms. In 1981 in Lodz, Wasko initiated and organized Construction in Process, a revolutionary series of international, self populating, artist organized exhibitions. Participants included the most recognized contemporary artists from around the world. He lives and works in Berlin.

DIANA BALMORI founded Balmori Associates in 1990 and was named 1 of 50 “Visionaries Who Are Changing Your World” in 2009 by Utne Reader, is recognized internationally for her creative interplay between landscape and architecture. In 2006 she created balmoriLABS to undertake and join the search for form in landscape and the intersection with architecture, art or engineering. Green Roofs, Floating Islands, Temporary Landscapes, Forms of Representation, and Zero Waste City are some of the labs. In addition to teaching at Yale University she has lectured and published extensively.

**CONGRATULATIONS ON THE RE-LAUNCH OF
NEW OBSERVATIONS.**

**IT HAS BEEN SUCH A PART OF
OUR HISTORY AND NOW WILL
CONTINUE TO BE A PART
OF OUR FUTURE.**

BEST OF LUCK!



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