

For Immediate Release, May 25, 2012



UCR ARTSblock presents

***Free Enterprise:
The Art of Citizen Space Exploration***

January 19 – March 23, 2013

Reception, Saturday, January 19, 6-9 p.m., free admission

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – UCR ARTSblock will present “Free Enterprise: The Art of Citizen Space Exploration,” the first contemporary art exhibition in the U.S. to explore implications of civilian space travel, which represents a major political and cultural shift away from sponsorship by the federal government and toward a free-market, private enterprise model. The exhibition will open Jan. 19, 2013, and run through March 23.

The exhibition has been in the planning stages since fall 2009. Its final presentation several years later in 2013 comes at a time when several private enterprise ventures will come to fruition.

They include the successful launch this week of the Falcon 9 vehicle by Space X, a company based in Hawthorne, Calif., and its rendezvous with the International Space Station; and the soon-to-be-

completed spaceport in New Mexico that will be the launch site for Virgin Galactic's space tourism program.

The exhibition will be presented in all three venues that constitute the University of California, Riverside ARTSblock: California Museum of Photography, Culver Center of the Arts, and Sweeney Art Gallery. The exhibition is co-curated by Tyler Stallings, artistic director of the Culver Center and director of Sweeney Art Gallery, and by Marko Peljhan, associate professor of art and media arts and technology at UC Santa Barbara. Both curators are involved with the Leonardo Space Art workshop, sponsored by MIT's *Leonardo* journal, and the International Astronautical Federation Committee for the Cultural Utilization of Space, a largely European-based organization that promotes and facilitates the innovative utilization of space by cultural sectors of society internationally.

Major support is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, University of California Institute for Research in the Arts, and the French-American Cultural Exchange Program.

The exhibition's structure of linking artists with aerospace entrepreneurs harkens back to the groundbreaking Art & Technology program at Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1967-1971, almost the same time span as the flight years of the Apollo program, Stallings said. It paired artists with high-technology corporations of the time in the hope that new art forms might arise. The program was one of the milestones — with influence to this day — in probing the dense associations of art to technology and science.

"Recent developments in the aerospace industry mark the dawn of a new space race," he said. "Outsourcing of space travel to private business represents a refocus from the cold war mentality of the 1960s in which space exploration was a grand, national assertion of collective identity, and ownership of the 'final frontier.' In contrast, the president's 2011 budget emphasizes private development of commercial sub-orbital flight and lunar exploration, signaling a shift from space as an abstract concept for exploration into a de-regulated realm, unconstrained, and exposed, to both socialization and capitalization. International artists will explore these untested territories with aerospace experts, engineers, scientists, visionaries and entrepreneurs."

Southern California has been at the center of the world aerospace industry and "Free Enterprise" will explore questions of westward expansion and the frontier spirit; valuing or balancing individual initiative above/with/against the needs or well-being of the collective; the impact of market forces and free enterprise versus those of government protection and regulation, Stallings explained.

"Although the private-public partnership is a somewhat novel model for space exploration, it is not new in the course of Western history," he said. "In fact, it has been the prime model for exploration and western expansion: the state sets goals and takes initial risks, followed by entrepreneurs, privateers or venture capitalists, who assume the ongoing burden of exploration. The legacy of this model is technological achievement, but one fraught with the exploitation and destruction of cultures and resources. It is exactly this schism on which 'Free Enterprise' is focused, reflecting the current state of privately funded space exploration, and critically considering it from divergent perspectives, leaving room to explore utopian visionary roots where the arts and space collide.

The Arts Catalyst in London, U.K., which commissions contemporary art that experimentally and critically engages with science, has initiated the majority of exhibitions with a similar focus as "Free

Enterprise.” Since 2001, they have presented a variety of projects that explore sub-orbital space, outer space, the International Space Station, and more recently, the moon. Projects began with MIR (Microgravity Interdisciplinary Research), an ongoing project organized by The Arts Catalyst and the “Free Enterprise” co-curator Marko Peljhan.

One of the main reasons for a lack of such exhibitions in the U.S. and The Arts Catalyst’s dedication, and those of other European curators and organizations, to explore space and art can be attributed to a triad of like-minded individuals in Europe, Stallings said. It began with Roger Malina, astrophysicist and editor of Leonardo magazine (and son of Frank Malina, the co-founder of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory), who held salons on art and science in France, with a special interest in space art. It was there that Peljhan first presented his work and started a long-term dialogue with the group of people gathered around the Malina house salons in 1998.

In 1997 Peljhan, during his project Makrolab at Documenta X in Kassel, Germany, started communicating with the cosmonauts of the MIR space station when the station was overflying the area. This started a radio friendship, that resulted in the setup of a video/conference Q&A performance with the cosmonauts of the MIR Kristall mission in early 1998 and in 1999, Peljhan founded a branch of his arts organization Projekt Atol Flight Operations, which worked together with the Slovenian theatre director Dragan Zivadinov on the setup of the first theatre performance in a parabolic flight in alternating gravity conditions in collaboration with the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Centre in Star City.

He invited the art/science curator Rob La Frenais to be on the first flight with them and this sparked a longer-term collaboration between Projekt Atol and The Arts Catalyst that resulted in the organization of three more flights and the creation of the MIR consortium. In the meantime, Projekt Atol Flight Operations became a vehicle through which Peljhan enabled fellow artists, scientists and hybrid practitioners to access the Star City facilities in a series of complex collaborative works.

ARTISTS

This exhibition focuses on artists who have had a deep engagement with space exploration issues throughout the course of their work. While the exhibition theme is on U.S. and California developments, international artists will reflect the global affects of these U.S. endeavors.

Center for Land Use Interpretation (Matt Coolidge, Sarah Simons, et. al., Los Angeles, CA) CLUI is a research and education organization interested in understanding the nature and extent of human interaction with the earth’s surface. CLUI’s project will evolve out of past, related projects such as *The Nellis Range Complex: Landscape of Conjecture*. www.clui.org

Richard Clar (Paris, France), one of the early pioneers at the intersection of space technology and art, has created projects such as *Spaceflight Dolphin*, a NASA approved art-and-technology payload concept conceived in 1982 to be deployed from the U.S. Space Shuttle. As a SETI experiment, dolphin “voices” transmitted from the sculpture-satellite might be detected or sensed by an extraterrestrial intelligence (ETI). <http://www.arttechnologies.com/>

Kitsou Dubois (Paris, France) was the first artist to go on a parabolic flight in 1990 used for training astronauts how to perform in zero gravity. Since then, she has gone on over 22 flights, during which

she has developed choreography that explores both weightlessness and gravity.
<http://www.kitsoudubois.com/>

eteam (Franziska Lamprecht & Hajoe Moderegger, New York & Mannheim) is in the business of buying land, whether in physical locations in the desert or virtual ones. Playing off real, huckster sites such as Lunar Real Estate or the Moon Shop, eteam is interested in exploring access to “private property on the moon.” <http://www.meineigenheim.org/>

Agnes Meyer-Brandis (Köln, Germany) will present a project that continues her exploration in both the myths and realities of weightlessness. She will explore “weightless fantasies” imagined by Earth’s new breed of space tourists and workers in privatized space exploration. <http://www.forschungsfloss.de/the-moon-geese-experiment/moongoose0.html>.

Trevor Paglen (Oakland, CA and New York, NY) will present work for the first time in Southern California from the ongoing series, *The Other Night Sky*, a project to track and photograph classified American satellites in Earth orbit, a total of 189 covert spacecraft. He has worked with computer scientists and engineers at the Eyebeam Center for Art + Technology to develop a software model to describe the orbital motion of classified spacecraft. Paglen is an artist, writer, and experimental geographer whose work deliberately blurs lines between social science, contemporary art, and journalism. <http://www.paglen.com/>

Carrie Paterson (Los Angeles, CA) will collaborate with aerospace industry entrepreneurs on the psychology / physiology of the discomfort of space travel creating a time-lapse scent-journey for the space tourist on short flights that gives an added narrative. This kind of environmental storytelling is used in the architecture of malls and amusement parks, which Paterson feels is a corollary to the consumable space journey of a space tourist. Paterson will construct simple beeswax scent carriers to make a home-sick kit that would be designed to quell feelings of unease, panic, or claustrophobia during sub-orbital flights or longer trips. <http://www.cpworks.org/>

Bradley Pitts (New York, NY and Amsterdam, Netherlands) started SINGULAR OSCILLATIONS in 2008, an ongoing collaboration with Projekt Atol Flight Operations and the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center (GCTC), using their parabolic-flight aircraft capable of producing twenty-five second periods of weightlessness and double gravity. The project is driven by the impossible desire of experiencing emptiness without affecting it in any way: of being there without being there. <http://bradleypitts.info/Index.htm>

Connie Samaras (Los Angeles, CA) has dealt with built environments, global capitalism, and future imaginaries in her work for the past decade. For *Free Enterprise*, she will present large-scale photographs that document the construction of Spaceport America, the new commercial outer spaceport being built outside Truth or Consequences, New Mexico near White Sands Missile Range. This port (scheduled to be completed by early 2011) will eventually service both tourists traveling to outer space (currently being pioneered by Virgin Galactic) as well as various future commercial space ventures. This project charts the speculative landscapes and sci-fi tropes of shifting global economies. <http://www.desotogallery.com/artists/samaras/desotogallerycob.html>

XCOR Aerospace (Mojave, CA) is a small, privately-held California C Corporation founded in 1999. The company has evolved from its original four founders, working out of the chief engineer’s tiny

hangar, to a team of 35 plus highly-skilled, experienced and talented employees housed in a 10,375 square foot hangar on the Mojave Air & Space Port in Mojave, California. The company is the path to the dream of spaceflight for its founders who recognize that the only way for them to get to space is to make it affordable for private citizens. The exhibition will include several prototypes and equipment associated with the development of their suborbital vehicle. <http://www.xcor.com/>

Additional partners and artists to be announced at a later date.

CURATORS

Tyler Stallings is the Artistic Director, Culver Center of the Arts and Director, Sweeney Art Gallery, University of California, Riverside is the director of University of California, Riverside. Recently, he has organized *Margarita Cabrera: Pulso y Martillo (Pulse and Hammer)*; *Mapping the Desert/Deserting the Map: An Interdisciplinary Response* (with Dick Hebdige), *Intelligent Design: Interspecies Art, Your Donations Do Our Work: Andrea Bowers and Suzanne Lacy*, *Absurd Recreation: Contemporary Art from China*, *Truthiness: Photography as Sculpture*, and *The Signs Pile Up: Paintings by Pedro Álvarez*. When chief curator at Laguna Art Museum (1999-2006), notable exhibitions that he organized included *Whiteness*, *A Wayward Construction*, *Surf Culture—The Art History of Surfing*, and *CLASS C: Ruben Ochoa*. His first exhibition to explore the intersection between artists and outer space was in 1997 with *Are We Touched? Identities from Outer Space*, which coincided with the 50th anniversary of the reported Roswell UFO crash and with NASA's Pathfinder landing on Mars that year. www.sweeney.ucr.edu, www.culvercenter.ucr.edu.

Marko Peljhan, University of California Santa Barbara, cofounded the Ljudmila digital media lab in Slovenia and is active in numerous tactical media communities. He founded the arts and technology organization Projekt Atol and coordinates the ongoing mobile laboratory project Makrolab, focusing on telecommunications, migrations and weather systems in an intersection of art and science. His work has been installed internationally including the Venice, Gwangju and Johannesburg Biennials, Documenta, and Ars Electronica. He is currently active in the Microgravity Interdisciplinary Research (MIR) initiative, coordinating and flight directing microgravity and space-art related experiments with the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Centre in Star City. <http://www.arcticperspective.org>, www.icepac.org, <http://makrolab.ljudmila.org/>

Visitor Information and Press Inquiries

UCR ARTSblock is located at 3824 & 3834 Main St., Riverside, CA 92501, and includes three venues: California Museum of Photography, Culver Center of the Arts, and Sweeney Art Gallery, which are open Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 5 p.m., plus 6-9 p.m. for First Thursday ArtWalks. Admission is \$3, which includes entry to all three venues, and is free during First Thursday ArtWalks (6-9 p.m.). For film screenings, Culver Center opens 30 minutes prior to the start time. See websites for additional information, <http://sweeney.ucr.edu>, <http://culvercenter.ucr.edu>, <http://cmp.ucr.edu>.

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Image: Page 1, Kitsou Dubois performance during zero gravity on parabolic flight.

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