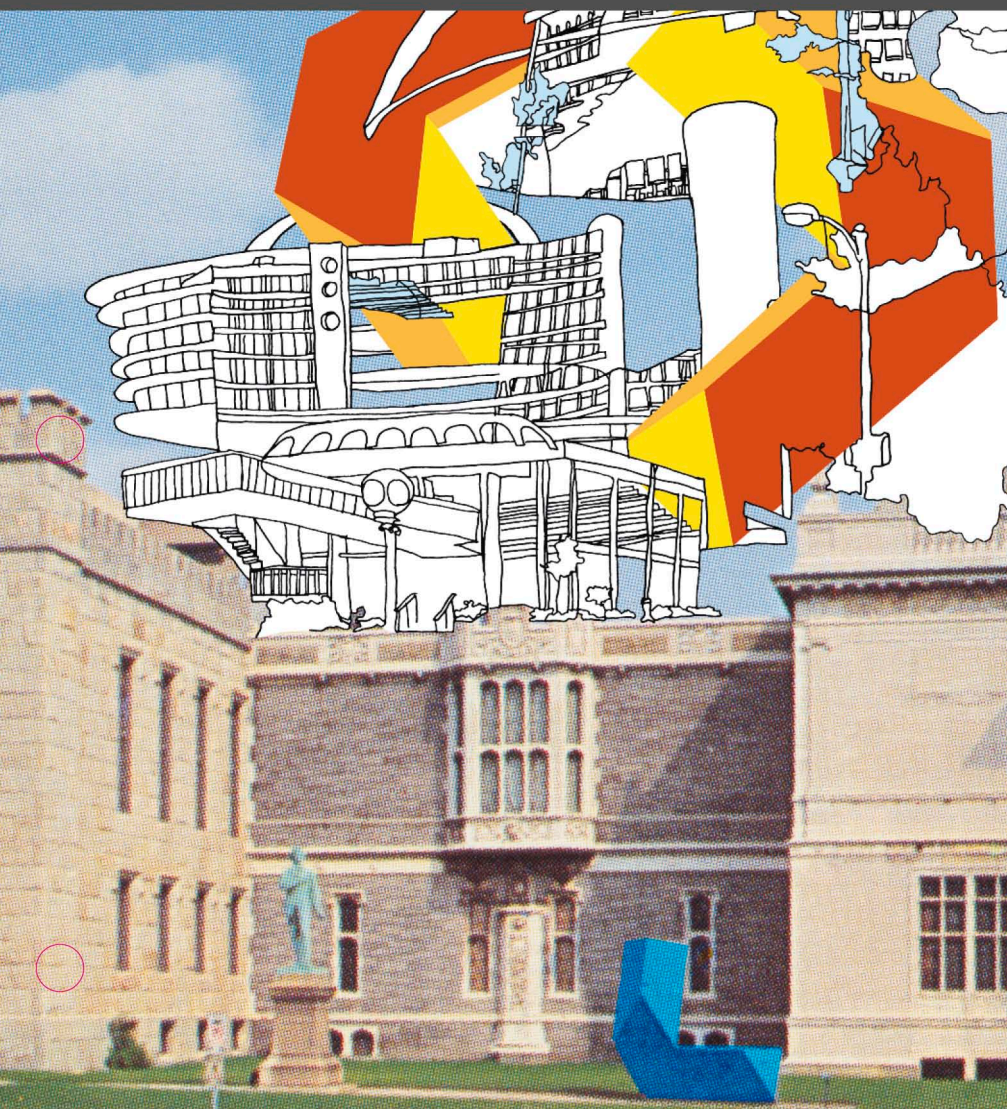


# KIM SCHOENSTADT MATRIX 160

OCTOBER 7, 2010 - JANUARY 9, 2011



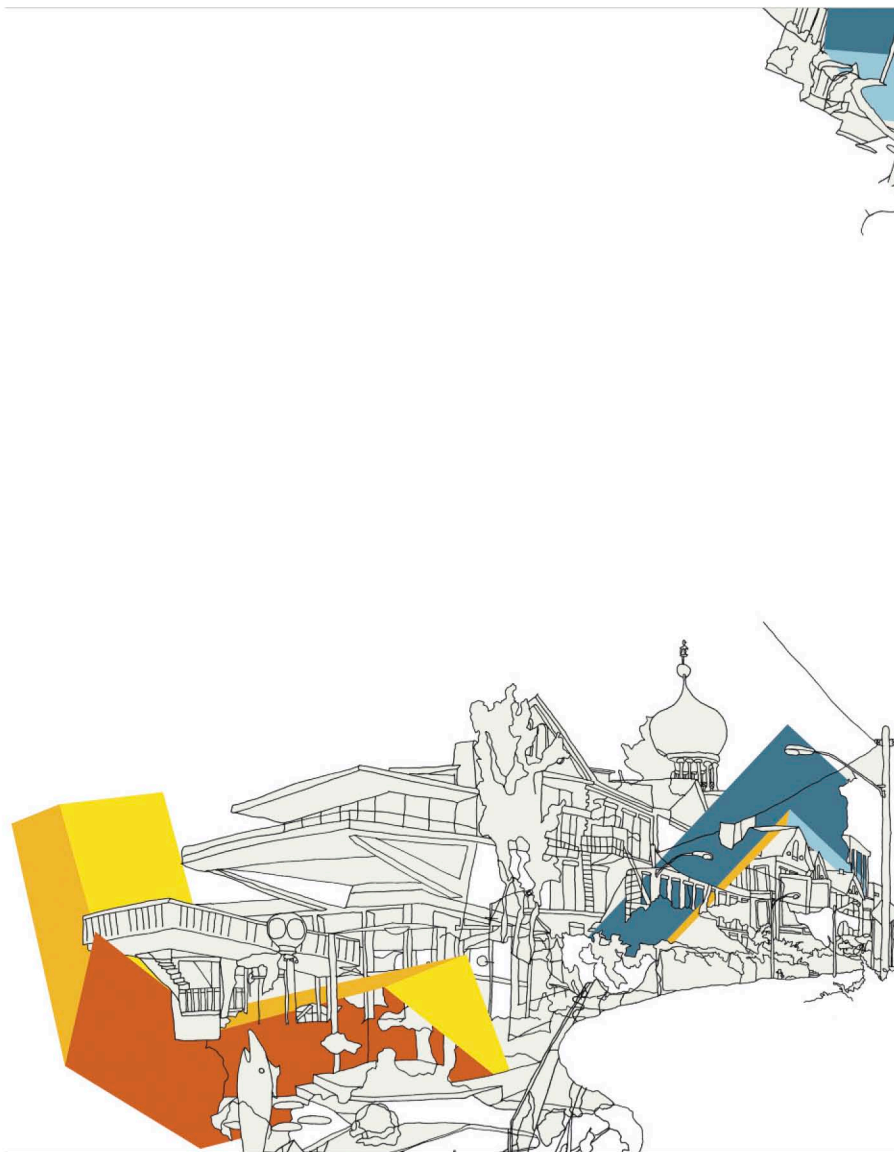
WADSWORTH ATHENEUM MUSEUM OF ART

# BRING THE OUTSIDE IN

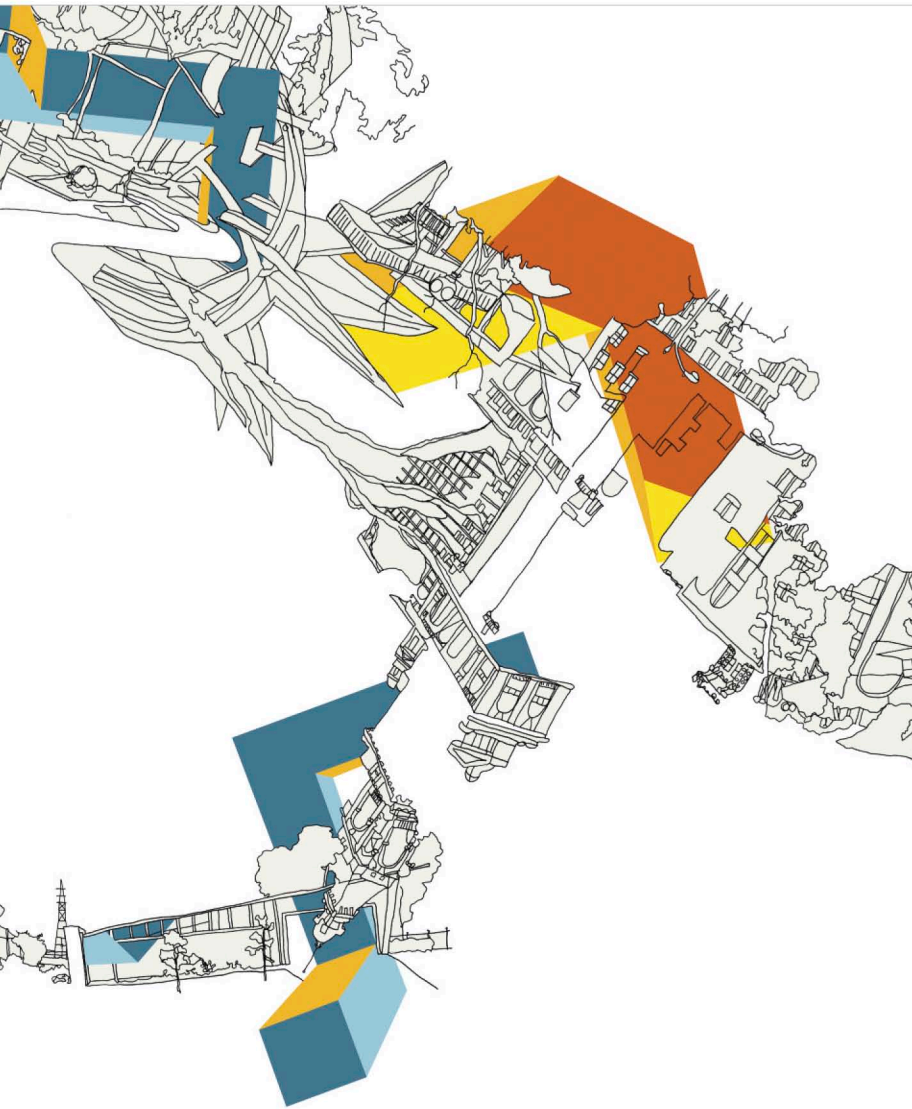
Visionary mid-century real estate developer Joseph Eichler built thousands of modernist homes in California between 1950 and 1974. His signature concept—“bring the outside in”—derives from an open floor plan with floor-to-ceiling banks of windows that physically provide the dweller with a sense of being outside when inside. On numerous levels, this idea resonates in the architectural wall drawings of Los Angeles artist Kim Schoenstadt, and even more directly with the site-specific presentation she has created for MATRIX 160, titled *Odd Lots Series: Hartford/Fiction*. Schoenstadt’s work features the real buildings and public sculpture of Hartford fused with the fictional architecture of Hollywood film and animation, such as renderings of the Eichler-inspired home of the Parr cartoon family in *The Incredibles* (2004). As well, the MATRIX gallery, featuring two large windows that open directly onto the street, brings downtown Hartford—most directly the Travelers Tower—into the exhibition, where it is featured on the wall. And in the simplest terms, the artist’s architecture-based line drawings on gallery walls literally bring a version of the outside world to an indoor space.

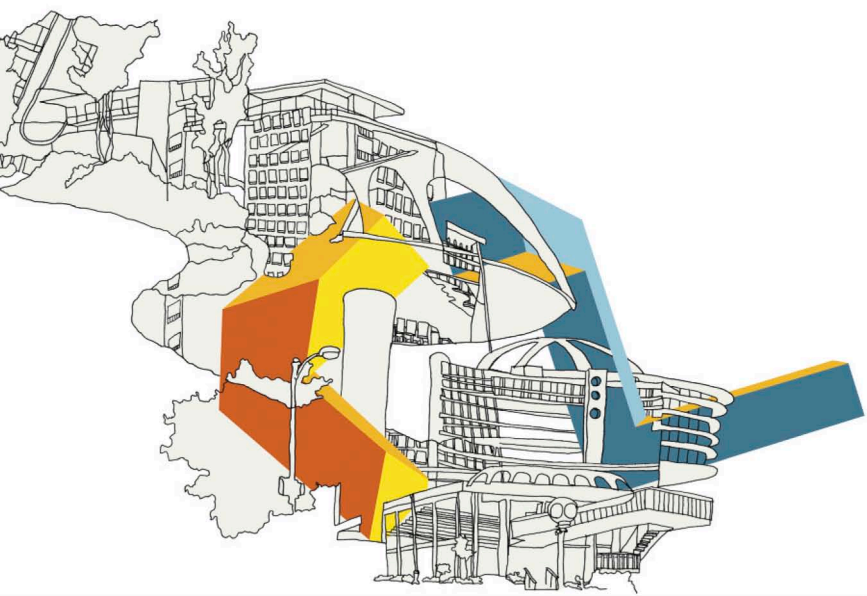
Schoenstadt’s dynamic and imaginative adaptation of a new outside world pushes the drawing medium from its traditional support on a sheet of paper. Drawing has long been Schoenstadt’s chosen mode of artistic expression. While advocating for its acceptance as a finished fine-art product, she tests the limits of its form.<sup>1</sup> In *Odd Lots*, her drawing overruns the gallery walls, where it dramatically rolls, spins, and splits. It even crosses the ceiling and invades the floor. The artist’s lively composition employs multiple oppositions: form and content, drawing and painting, positive and negative space, reality and fiction, East Coast and West Coast, Hartford and Hollywood. The *Odd Lots* title, an ongoing series by the artist, makes a sly reference to an investment term,<sup>2</sup> while also pointing to the real estate term “lot” as a parcel of land and her “odd” combinations of buildings and structures from different worlds.

For fifteen years, Schoenstadt has lived and worked in Los Angeles, the epicenter of the film industry and mid-century utopian architecture. Conflating these two ever-present phenomena and personal interests, the artist brings the fictional architectural icons of film and animation to her wall drawings. In *Odd Lots*, she includes the previously noted Parr home in *The Incredibles*, the Skypad Apartments of *The Jetsons* (1962-63), Villa Arpel from Jacques Tati’s *Mon oncle* (1958), the modernist Vandamm house in Alfred Hitchcock’s *North by Northwest* (1959), and the Hall of Justice and Hall of Doom from the *Super Friends* animated series (1973-86). These fictional buildings are not mere background elements, but rather assume central roles in their respective narratives. Although noteworthy for design, the architecture’s physical form is not Schoenstadt’s only concern. The weight of its intellectual content—what the buildings represent in the context of their films and what they signify in contemporary culture and society—holds equal importance. For example, the looming Vandamm house of Hitchcock’s villain finds its inspiration in Frank Lloyd Wright, while the Hall of Doom (concurrent with the popularity of *Star Wars*) visually



KIM SCHOENSTADT  
COMPUTER GENERATED PRELIMINARY DRAWING FOR  
*ODD LOTS SERIES: HARTFORD/FICTION*, 2010 (DETAIL)  
PEN AND PAINT ON WALL  
DIMENSIONS VARIABLE  
COURTESY OF THE ARTIST





KIM SCHOENSTADT  
*CAN CONTROL: LA VERNE*, 2007  
SPRAY PAINT ON CANVAS  
84 X 116 INCHES  
COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



resembles the black mask of Darth Vader. With dark humor, Schoenstadt recalls a mental and visual connection she made between the Super Friends' villainous counterparts, known as the "Legion of Doom," and President George W. Bush's excessively dramatic term "Axis of Evil," in reference to Iran, Iraq, and North Korea. As the adage goes, the truth is stranger than fiction.

In conversation with the fictional buildings, the architecture of Hartford makes equally strong statements. In preparation for her *MATRIX* project, Schoenstadt visited Hartford to explore and document the city's industry and architecture. Hartford's presence as an insurance capital is well known, and for Schoenstadt its powerful position is manifested in its commanding architecture, including the Travelers Tower (1919)—once the tallest building in New England—and the Phoenix Mutual Life Insurance building (1963). Max Abramovitz's Phoenix building is heralded as the world's first two-sided building and is better known as the "boat building" for its ship's-bow form where the curved sides meet. Beyond the insurance giants, the home of the Samuel Colt Firearms Company, the Colt Armory (1867), endures as a curious standout on the Hartford skyline. Topped with the trademark rampant colt on a gold orb, the factory's signature blue onion dome with gold stars was a brilliant marketing tool, intended to draw the attention and inquiries of passersby. Hartford's architecture of corporate power is balanced with the buildings of architects of national and international prominence. Again, mid-century modern design reigns in Schoenstadt's selection of concrete Brutalist constructions, including Welton Becket's Bank of

America building (1967) and I.M. Pei's Bushnell Tower (1969). Just outside of town, Victor Lundy's futuristic Unitarian Meeting House (1964) assumes the form of a concrete space ship. A downtown landmark, Alexander Calder's monumental red-orange sculpture *Stegosaurus* (1973) also appears. The most recent addition to the city is Cesar Pelli's Connecticut Science Center (2009), a geometric structure of glass and metal with a dynamic wave-like Magic Carpet Roof.

Schoenstadt interrupts the fluid dialogue between real and fictional buildings with the insertion of painted versions of artist Tony Smith's sculpture. Inspired by Smith's *Amaryllis* (1965),<sup>3</sup> depicted on a vintage Wadsworth Atheneum postcard that she selected to use for her invitation design (see a variation on brochure cover), Schoenstadt made the connection between Smith and the history of the MATRIX program<sup>4</sup> and further includes *Amaryllis* in her wall drawing. She also uses Smith's *Free Ride* (1962) throughout the drawing, as if spinning in mid-air. Playfully rendering both steel sculptures in vibrant color—orange, yellow, and blue, rather than their original black painted finish—Schoenstadt utilizes the objects as formal elements or “interjections”<sup>6</sup> to interrupt the excessively intricate accumulation of black line. Likewise, the shadow forms—actually silhouettes of the various assemblages of buildings—provide tone within the lines of the buildings. The silhouettes ultimately escape the confines of the line to travel across the ceiling to the opposing wall.

What is perhaps most striking about Schoenstadt's *Odd Lots* wall drawing is the blurring of the lines between the buildings of reality and those of fiction. Although clearly delineated for the purposes of this essay, the architecture is connected, fused, and intertwined within her line drawing. The artist's use of a consistent line equalizes the individual structures, regardless of their original sources in reality, photograph, film, or animation. Schoenstadt also returns the architecture to its origins in drawing, stating, “One thing I find interesting about architecture is that it is a physical interactive form which begins with a drawing.”<sup>7</sup> In her presentation, many of the individual buildings fall into a gray area, where the real architecture seems imaginary due to its radical design, like Abramovitz's Phoenix building, Pelli's science center, and Lundy's Unitarian Church. And conversely, virtually all of the fictional buildings feel entirely plausible as realized buildings. Fictional objects inform the real, sculpture informs architecture, and vice versa. Creative freedom has blossomed in the field of architecture in recent decades, as exemplified in the sculptural designs of architects like Frank Gehry, Rem Koolhaas, and Daniel Libeskind. Schoenstadt's *Odd Lots* offers a dizzying whirlwind of possibilities of contemporary architecture's fantastical roots from our popular culture, and in our own backyard, while highlighting and championing the medium with which art and architecture begin—the drawing.

#### **PATRICIA HICKSON**

Emily Hall Tremain Curator of Contemporary Art  
Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art





#### SOURCE MATERIALS

1. TRAVELERS TOWER, 1919  
DONN BARBER, ARCHITECT
2. PHOENIX BUILDING, 1963  
MAX ABRAMOVITZ, ARCHITECT
3. COLT ARMORY, 1867  
GENERAL WILLIAM B. FRANKLIN, DESIGNER
4. BANK OF AMERICA BUILDING, 1967  
WELTON BECKET, ARCHITECT
5. BANK OF AMERICA PLAZA  
WELTON BECKET, ARCHITECT
6. BUSHNELL TOWER, 1969 (RIGHT)  
I. M. PEI, ARCHITECT
7. UNITARIAN MEETING HOUSE, 1964  
VICTOR LUNDY, ARCHITECT
8. CONNECTICUT SCIENCE CENTER, 2009  
CESAR PELLI, ARCHITECT
9. ALEXANDER CALDER  
*STEGOSAURUS*, 1973  
PAINTED STEEL  
HEIGHT: 50 FEET  
ALFRED E. BURR MEMORIAL, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT  
THE ELLA BURR MCMANUS TRUST  
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(ARS), NEW YORK

PHOTO CREDITS: JONATHAN FURMANSKI, ALLEN PHILLIPS, AND KIM SCHOENSTADT

#### SCULPTURE

10. TONY SMITH  
*AMARYLLIS*, 1965  
PAINTED STEEL  
138 X 90 X 138 INCHES  
VIEW FROM THE CANTOR ROOF GARDEN, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM  
OF ART, NEW YORK, 1993  
WADSWORTH ATHENEUM MUSEUM OF ART; PURCHASED BY  
EXCHANGE AND WITH FUNDS CONTRIBUTED BY JOSEPH L.  
SHULMAN, 1967.2  
© 2010 ESTATE OF TONY SMITH / ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS),  
NEW YORK / COURTESY MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY, NEW YORK
11. TONY SMITH  
*FREE RIDE*, 1962  
PAINTED STEEL  
80 X 80 X 80 INCHES  
THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK; GIFT OF AGNES GUND  
AND PURCHASE  
© 2010 ESTATE OF TONY SMITH / ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS),  
NEW YORK / COURTESY MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY, NEW YORK

# KIM SCHOENSTADT

## EDUCATION

1995 BFA, Pitzer College, Claremont, California

## SOLO AND TWO-PERSON EXHIBITIONS

- 2010 *Kim Schoenstadt: MATRIX 160*, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT
- 2009 *Tell Me Something Good: A collaboration between Kim Schoenstadt/Rita McBride*, Santa Monica Museum, Santa Monica, CA  
*Tell Me Something Good: A collaboration between Kim Schoenstadt/Rita McBride*, Alexander and Bonin, New York, NY  
*Crisscross: Mara Lonner/Kim Schoenstadt*, LAX Airport Terminal 3, Los Angeles, CA  
*Kim Schoenstadt Fax Drawings 1-4*, Secondroom Gallery, Brussels, Belgium
- 2008 *Byloos/Schoenstadt*, Toomey/Tourell Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 2007 *Benicia Gantner & Kim Schoenstadt*, Angels Gate Cultural Center, San Pedro, CA  
*Can Control: Eindhoven*, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, The Netherlands,  
*Composition for a Large Room in Three Movements*, Harris Art Gallery, The University of La Verne, La Verne, CA
- 2006 *Deep Structures*, 4-F Gallery, Chinatown, Los Angeles, CA
- 2005 *Down the Road, to the Right*, 18th Street Arts Center, Santa Monica, CA
- 2004 *Jon Furmanski and Kim Schoenstadt: Another Cowboy Song*, A two-part collaborative project, Part B: 4-F Gallery, Chinatown, Los Angeles, CA  
*Jon Furmanski and Kim Schoenstadt: Don't Fence Me In*, A two-part collaborative project, Part A: Biola University, La Mirada, CA
- 2002 *Kim Schoenstadt*, Lemon Sky Projects, Los Angeles, CA
- 2001 *Kim Schoenstadt*, Susan Inglet Gallery, New York, NY

## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2009 *Construct and Dissolve*, Galerie Sabine Knust, Munich, Germany
- 2008 *LAAGAFBLA2008*, Phantom Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2007 *Big Bang and other origins*, David Sallow Gallery, Chinatown, Los Angeles, CA  
*Mapping the Self*, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Chicago, IL  
*Next New*, San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art, San Jose, CA  
*Uneasy Angles/Imagine LA*, Sprueth/Magers Gallery, Munich, Germany  
*Drawn Out*, Sam Francis Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
- 2006 *Street Scenes: Projects for DC*, Billboard truck exhibition, Washington, DC  
*Turtle, an anarchic salon*, Chelsea College of Art & Design, London, England  
*Squatting at New Langton*, New Langton Arts, San Francisco, CA  
*Total Art Performance*, Getty Center, Los Angeles, CA
- 2005 *Surface Charge*, VCUarts Anderson Gallery, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA  
*Prague Biennale*, National Gallery, Veletrzní Palac, Kinski Palac, Prague, Czech Republic  
*New Prints 2005/Summer: Etchings*, International Print Center, New York, NY

Born 1973, Chicago, Illinois  
Lives and works in Venice, California

- 2004 *Lodz Biennale*, International Artists Museum, Lodz, Poland  
*100 Artists See God*, Curated by John Baldessari and Meg Cranston for Independent Curators International. Traveled.
- 2003 *Systems of Interiors and Exteriors for Better Living*, Pitzer College, Claremont, CA
- 2002 *Das Spider Man*, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles, CA  
Necessary Fictions, De Chiara Gallery, New York, NY

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- O'Neill-Butler, Lauren, "500 Words," *ArtForum online*, New York, NY, September 2009.
- Ravich, Nick, "Art 21 Blog: HYPERLINK," <http://blog.art21.org/2009/12/11/on-location-filming-art21-educators-in-southern-california/>"On Location: Filming Art 21 Educators in Southern California."
- Mojica, Jason, "Mapping the Self," *Time Out*, Chicago, IL, February 14, 2008.
- Buuck, David, "'NextNew 2007' and Mitra Fabian at the San Jose ICA," *Artweek Magazine*, Palo Alto, CA, November 2007.
- Frank, Peter, "Chaos Theorizing," *LA Weekly*, Los Angeles, CA, January 9, 2008.
- "Artist Project," *Prop Magazine*, Düsseldorf, Germany, October 2007.
- Webb, Michael, and Juergen Nogai, "Venice, CA: Art + Architecture in a Maverick Community" Abrams, New York, NY.
- Lambrecht, Luk, "Complexe tentoonstellingen met een visie in het Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven," *Knack*, Brussels, Belgium, May 23, 2007.
- Richardson, Margaret, "Surface Charge," *Art Papers*, London, England, March/April 2006.
- Pagel, David, "Around the Galleries," *Los Angeles Times*, November 18, 2005, pp. E24-25.
- Lyon, Christopher, "Constructing a Biennial," *Art in America*, April 2005, pp.54-59.
- Schedlmayer, Nina, "Lodz Biennale," *Camera Austria*, No. 88, 2004, pp. 84-85.
- "Simply Divine," *The Guardian*, London, England, November 13, 2004.
- Pine, Dan, "Imaging God – 100 artists explore the Divine in new exhibit," *J. The Jewish News Bulletin of Northern California*, San Francisco, CA, February 27-March 4, 2004.
- "News-Highlight," *Contemporary Magazine*, No. 57, London, England, 2003.
- Frank, Peter, "Pick of the Week," *LA Weekly*, Los Angeles, CA, April 12-18, 2002.

<sup>1</sup> Kim Schoenstadt, email correspondence to the author, September 3, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> *Odd Lot* is an amount of a security that is less than the normal unit of trading for that particular security. *Odd Lots Series* sounds like Odd Lot Theory, which is defined as a technical analysis theory/indicator based on the assumption that the small individual investor is always wrong. See [www.investopedia.com](http://www.investopedia.com). These investment terms relate to Schoenstadt's work in terms of the economics of big business and industry as they relate to real estate.

<sup>3</sup> Tony Smith's sculpture *Amaryllis* is in the Wadsworth Atheneum's collection, but not currently on view. Tony Smith (American, 1912-1980), *Amaryllis*, 1965. Steel, 138 x 90 x 138 inches. Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art; Purchased by exchange and with funds contributed by Joseph L. Shulman, 1967.2.

<sup>4</sup> In 1975, the MATRIX series of changing exhibitions of contemporary art was launched. In the MATRIX notebook's "Introductory Notes on the MATRIX Project," Wadsworth Director James Elliott (1966-1976) credits Samuel Wagstaff, Jr., Andrea Miller-Keller, and Tony Smith for their "considerable input into the evolution of the MATRIX concept." Additionally, "Tony Smith suggested the title MATRIX with emphasis on the definition of it as a space within which something else originates or develops."

<sup>5</sup> Tony Smith (American, 1912-1980), *Free Ride*, 1962. Painted steel, 80 x 80 x 80 inches. The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Gift of Agnes Gund and Purchase. Both *Amaryllis* and *Free Ride* were included in *Tony Smith: Two Exhibitions of Sculpture* held concurrently at the Wadsworth Atheneum and the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Philadelphia in 1966-67.

<sup>6</sup> Kim Schoenstadt, conversation with the author, August 29, 2010.

<sup>7</sup> Kim Schoenstadt, email correspondence to author, September 3, 2010.

Cover Image:

Kim Schoenstadt

*Invitation for MATRIX 160, 2010*

Drawing over vintage Wadsworth Atheneum postcard

Courtesy of the artist

## WORK IN THE EXHIBITION

Kim Schoenstadt

*Odd Lots Series: Hartford/Fiction, 2010*

Paint, pen, and vinyl on walls, ceiling, and floor

Dimensions variable

## ARTIST TALK

MATRIX Gallery Talk

Kim Schoenstadt

6:00 pm

Thursday, October 7, 2010

Kim Schoenstadt will discuss her site-specific wall drawing in the MATRIX Gallery.

## THANKS

Merideth Adams, Cat Balco, Alan Barton, Ulrich Birkmaier, Beata Czop, Mark Giuliano, Fran Kida, Adria Patterson, Allen Phillips, Kim Reynolds, Luiselle Rivera, and Chris Sciarrotta.

*Can Control: Hartford's* community partners: Charter Oak Cultural Center, Guakia, Mi Casa, and José Camacho, Friends of Heaven.

The artist would like to thank her family, especially Jonathan and Keaton, and Brienne Arrington, John Baldessari, Dianne Fitzgerald, Shelly George, Patricia Hickox, Emily-Jane Kirwan, Mara Lonner, Juan Thorp, Michael Woodcock, and the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art.

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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

Kim Schoenstadt

*Can Control: Hartford*

Pen and spray paint on vinyl canvas

Saturday, October 2, 2010

Kim Schoenstadt will collaborate with community members from the Charter Oak Cultural Center, Guakia, and Mi Casa to create a graffiti-based artwork at New Ross County Wexford Park, the site of Heaven, a future skate park in downtown Hartford.



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