

GRAHAM FOUNDATION

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Zak Kyes Working With... on view at the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts June 14 – September 22, 2012.

Zak Kyes Working With... Can Altay, Charles Arsène-Henry, Shumon Basar, Richard Birkett, Andrew Blauvelt, Edward Bottoms, Wayne Daly, Jesko Fezer, Joseph Grigely, Nikolaus Hirsch, Maria Lind, Markus Miessen, Michel Müller, Radim Peško, Barbara Steiner

Exhibition 14 June - 22 September 2012 Graham Foundation

Chicago, June 5, 2012 – *Zak Kyes Working With... Can Altay, Charles Arsène-Henry, Shumon Basar, Richard Birkett, Andrew Blauvelt, Edward Bottoms, Wayne Daly, Jesko Fezer, Joseph Grigely, Nikolaus Hirsch, Maria Lind, Markus Miessen, Michel Müller, Radim Peško, Barbara Steiner* will open with a talk by Zak Kyes and the world premiere book launch of the exhibition catalog on Thursday, June 14, 2012.

The exhibition brings together a range of works by Zak Kyes and a host of collaborators including architects, artists, writers, curators, editors, and graphic designers, presenting contemporary graphic design as a practice that mediates, and is mediated by, its allied disciplines.

Kyes has developed a graphic design practice that includes publishing, editing, and site-specific projects for and in collaboration with cultural institutions. He founded the design studio Zak Group in 2005, and in 2006 became art director of the Architectural Association, London. By broadening the highly specialized role of the designer, Kyes challenges and further develops today's graphic design practice.

While this work constitutes the exhibition's point of departure, its focus is on the conceptual, visual, and economic intersections that link Kyes with his collaborators, revealing and further unfolding the designer's multivalent practice. These intersections vary in form from idealistic to pragmatic, urgent and time-sensitive, to abiding and long lasting.

Rather than presenting a chronological overview of Kyes's work, the exhibition highlights the designer's relations with partners, clients, and institutions, and the creative potential of these collaborations to evolve traditional understandings of graphic design, art, and architecture. Each invited contributor is assigned a role that addresses the different formats of an exhibition. Architect Jesko Fezer was asked to propose the exhibition architecture, while typographer Radim Peško designed a typeface for the show's object labels and wall texts. Artist Joseph Grigely created the exhibition poster, and writers Shumon Basar and Charles Arsène-Henry conceived of the audio guide. Artist Can Altay contributed a publishing workshop, and archivist and librarian Edward Bottoms offered a historical lecture on architectural publishing. Architects Nikolaus Hirsch and Michel Müller devised an archive structure, and graphic designer Wayne Daly designed an expanded exhibition catalogue published by Sternberg Press (2012) that includes contributions by Richard Birkett, Andrew Blauvelt, Edward Bottoms, Maria Lind, Markus Miessen, and Barbara Steiner, among others.

CONTRIBUTORS

Zak Kyes is a Swiss-American graphic designer. Kyes formed the design studio Zak Group in 2005 and joined the Architectural Association, London, as art director in September 2006. In 2008, he cofounded Bedford Press, an imprint of AA Publications. The studio was awarded the INFORM Award for Conceptual Design in 2011 and was twice awarded the prize for the Most Beautiful Swiss Book in 2010. The studio's work has been included in the exhibitions *Graphic Design Worlds* (Triennale Design Museum, Milan, 2011), *Wide White Space* (CCA Wattis, San Francisco, 2011), *The Malady of Writing* (MACBA, Barcelona, 2009), *Graphic Design for and against Cities* (Corner College, Zurich, 2009), *Dubai Duesseldorf* (Kunstverein fuer die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Duesseldorf, 2009) and the 22nd International Biennale of Graphic Design (Brno, 2009). Apart from studio projects, Kyes's critical practice encompasses publishing, curating, and site-specific projects for and with art institutions. His work engages with publications and their dissemination as sites for debate and exchange rather than documentation. He currently teaches at the Architectural Association School of Architecture, London, and in the MA program at ECAL (Ecole Cantonale d'Art de Lausanne).

Can Altay is an artist living in Istanbul. His installations of videos, mappings, books, and photographs incorporate different forms of research on the urban environment. Altay studies improvised architectures in the city, as well as hidden structures of support, unauthorized systems of organization and models of cohabitation. He further investigates the production of ideas and notions of public space through "setting a setting": a body of work where he proposes spaces and constructs for gatherings. The clashes and overlaps between function and meaning and unpredictable reconfigurations within systems are some of his main interests. Altay has had solo exhibitions at Casco, Utrecht (2011); The Showroom, London (2010); Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin (2008); Sala Rekalde, Bilbao (2006); and Spike Island, Bristol (2007). His work has been included in the Istanbul, Havana, Busan, Gwangju, and Taipei Biennials; and in museums and galleries such as the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; ZKM | Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe; MoMA PS1, New York; and Platform Garanti, Istanbul.

Charles Arsène-Henry is a writer and editor based in London. Arsène-Henry founded White Box Black Box, a speculative agency exploring formats of research and fiction. In 2011 he co-curated the exhibition *Translated By* at the Architectural Association, London, where he teaches the media studies seminar *Shapes of Fiction*. With the Luma Foundation, he is currently conceiving *The Library is on Fire*. Arsène-Henry has been a reader of French literature for Faber and Faber since 2006.

Shumon Basar is a writer and curator based in London. He is currently working on his first novel, *World!World!World!* a project funded by a 2010 Graham Foundation grant. Basar is coeditor of *Cities from Zero* (Architectural Association, 2007), *With/Without* (Bidoun, 2007), *Did Someone Say Participate?* (MIT Press, 2006), and *Hans Ulrich Obrist Interviews: Volume 2* (Charta Art, 2010), and is a contributing editor to *Bidoun* and *Tank* magazines, as well as cofounder of *Sexymachinery*. With architect Eyal Weizman and artists Jane and Louise Wilson he made the film *Face Scripting*, which debuted at the 2011 Sharjah Biennial. He directs the cultural program at the Architectural Association, London, where he co-curated the audio exhibition *Translated By* (2011) and launched a new "live magazine" titled *Format: The Shapes of Discourse*.

Richard Birkett is curator at Artists Space, New York. Since 2010 he has co-curated exhibitions with Artists Space director Stefan Kalmár including *Mark Morrisroe: From This Moment On* (2011) and *'Identity'* (2011). Previously he was curator at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, curating projects including *Chto Delat?: The Urgent Need to Struggle* (2010), *Calling Out of Context* (with Jamie Eastman, 2009), *Talk Show* (with Will Holder and Jennifer Thatcher, 2009) and *Nought to Sixty* (2008). He has contributed texts to artists' monographs and art periodicals, and edited publications including *COSEY COMPLEX Book* (with Maria Fusco, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2012) and *Dispersion* (with Polly Staple, Institute for Contemporary Art, London, 2008).

Andrew Blauvelt is curator of architecture and design and chief of communications and audience engagement at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. From 1998 to 2010 he also served as design director of the Walker, heading its in-house editorial, publishing, and graphic design studio. He has curated several traveling exhibitions including *Graphic Design: Now in Production* with the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, New York (2011); *Worlds Away: New Suburban Landscapes* with the Heinz Architectural Center at Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (2008); *Some Assembly Required: Contemporary Prefabricated Houses* (2006); and *Strangely Familiar: Design and Everyday Life* (2003). He writes about design and culture for a variety of publications and is a contributing writer for *DesignObserver*.

Edward Bottoms is the archivist at the Architectural Association Library, London. His areas of research include Georgian portraiture, collecting and patronage on the early Grand Tour, and nineteenth-century architectural cast museums. Bottoms's work with the archives has resulted in articles on the Royal Architectural Museum; Anglo-Swedish architectural exchanges in the interwar period; and student-initiated magazines, journals, and periodicals. The archives house a substantial collection of material on the social and intellectual history of architectural education, dating back to the association's origins in the 1840s. Its holdings include a wealth of student drawings, models, posters, and ephemera, together with the association's educational and administrative records. The archives highlight the significance architecture schools have in the formation, propagation, and transmission of architectural culture, theory, and practice.

Wayne Daly is a graphic designer at the Architectural Association Print Studio, London. Daly studied at Ireland's Waterford Institute of Technology as well as at the London College of Communication. He recently established the micro-press Precinct, which publishes books in collaboration with artists and writers, including a recent essay by Adam Harper on the work of American musician John Maus. He has written for the New Zealand-based journal *The National Grid* and has guest-lectured at the London College of Communication, Werkplaats Typografie, and the American University of Beirut. He founded Bedford Press with Zak Kyes at the Architectural Association in the summer of 2008.

Jesko Fezer is a Berlin-based architect and professor for experimental design at the Hochschule für bildende Künste Hamburg. In cooperation with the Institut für angewandte urbanistik, Fezer realized architecture projects in Munich, Stuttgart, Berlin, Utrecht, Graz, New York, and London. He is cofounder of the thematic bookshop Pro qm and coeditor of the political architecture magazine *An Architektur*. Most recently, he codirected the research program Civic City: Design for the Post-Neoliberal City at the Institute for Design Research at Zürcher Hochschule der Künste. Fezer specializes in postwar architectural history, design methodology, participation, and process-based urbanism.

Joseph Grigely is an American artist and cultural critic whose work explores the malleability of communication and the ways art can be unmade and remade through its own dissemination. Grigely's books include *Textualterity: Art, Theory, and Textual Criticism* (University of Michigan Press, 1995), *Exhibition Prosthetics* (Bedford Press, 2010), and the forthcoming *Textualterity 2*. He is currently professor of visual and critical studies at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Nikolaus Hirsch is currently director of Städelschule and Portikus in Frankfurt am Main. An architect, Hirsch has designed the New Synagogue, Dresden; the Hinzert Documentation Center; the Bockenheimer Depot Theater, Frankfurt (with William Forsythe); unitednationsplaza, Berlin (with Anton Vidokle); European Kunsthalle, Cologne; and numerous exhibitions, including *Making Things Public* curated by Bruno Latour at ZKM | Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe (2005), and *Indian Highway* at Serpentine Gallery, London (2008/09). He is currently designing a studio for Rirkrit Tiravanija's *The Land* and the *Cybermohalla Hub* in Delhi, a hybrid between school, community center, and gallery, that involves seventy young practitioners engaging their urban context through various media. Hirsch has curated *ErsatzStadt: Representations of the Urban*, at the Volksbühne, Berlin (2005); *Cultural Agencies*, Istanbul (2009–10), and *Time/Bank* at the Portikus (2011). His books include *On Boundaries* (Lukas & Sternberg, 2007), *Track 17* (Sternberg Press, 2009), and *Institution Building* (Sternberg Press, 2009).

Markus Miessen is an architect and writer. Initiator of the Participation Quadrilogy, he has published around the question of critical spatial practice, institution building, and spatial politics. Architectural projects include Loughborough University Arts Centre; Gwangju Biennial Hub; Performa Hub, New York; and Post Office Manifesta 8, Murcia. In 2008 he founded the Winter School Middle East. He has had academic positions at the Architectural Association, London (2004–08); Berlage Institute, Rotterdam (2009–10); and Hochschule für Gestaltung Karlsruhe (2010–11). Miessen is now professor of critical spatial practice at the Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main; and guest professor at the Haute école d'art et de design, Geneva; as well as the University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

Michel Müller is professor at the Cologne Institute for Architecture and Design. Müller wrote his PhD dissertation on the planning methods of convertible architecture. His work includes the Erasmus12 Kittler Power Station, Darmstadt; the Alte Maschinenhalle, Dornach; and numerous exhibitions, including *Making Things Public* curated by Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel at ZKM | Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe (2005); *Frequencies [Hz]* at Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt am Main (2002); and *Indian Highway* at Serpentine Gallery, London (2008/9). Müller's ongoing research on institutional models has resulted in projects such as the Bockenheimer Depot Theater, Frankfurt (with William Forsythe); unitednationsplaza, Berlin (with Anton Vidokle); the *Cybermohalla Hub*, Delhi; a studio for Rirkrit Tiravanija's *The Land*; and a temporary living structure for the homeless in Frankfurt.

Radim Peško is an Amsterdam-based graphic designer whose work focuses on typography as an intersection of technologies and language, as well as type design and occasional exhibition projects. In addition to his online eponymous digital-type foundry, Peško regularly collaborates with artist Katerina Šedá and contributes to *Dot Dot Dot*. Peško currently teaches at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam.

Barbara Steiner is a curator and writer. Currently she is working on a collaborative art project about Europe, which takes place in ten cities in and outside the European Union and in the newspaper *Fair Observer*. From 2001 to 2010 she was director of the Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst, Leipzig. In close collaboration with architects and artists she realized the gallery's pavilion, café/bar, garden, shop, and hotel. She edited *Mögliche Museen* (with Charles Esche, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2008), dealing with the potential of the public art museum; *Negotiating Spaces* (with the architects as-if berlin-wien, Jovis, 2009); and *The Captured Museum* (Jovis, 2011), focusing on private commitment to art. Steiner's interest focuses on the politics of representation; institutional critique/criticality, architecture, and display; and economic critique/criticality in the field of art and museums. She studied art history and political science at the University of Vienna and wrote her doctoral thesis on the "ideology of the white cube."

RELATED PUBLICATION

An expanded exhibition catalogue published by Sternberg Press accompanies the exhibition and includes contributions by Richard Birkett, Andrew Blauvelt, Edward Bottoms, Maria Lind, and Barbara Steiner, among others. (June 2012, 11 x 17.8 cm, 266 pages, 5 b/w and 43 color ill., softcover, ISBN 978-1-934105-92-4).

CURATION AND EXHIBITION TOUR

Zak Kyes Working With... was curated with Barbara Steiner and organized on the occasion of Kyes receiving the INFORM Award, an annual accolade presented to graphic designers who develop a practice within the context of applied and contemporary art. The show opened at the Museum for Contemporary Art Leipzig and traveled to the Architectural Association, London. The Chicago presentation is organized by Sarah Herda, Graham Foundation Director, with Ellen Hartwell Alderman, Program Coordinator.

FUNDING

This project is supported by the Swiss Council Pro Helvetia, Cassochrome, the Architectural Association, and a 2011 grant from the Graham Foundation.

RELATED EVENTS

Opening reception with Zak Kyes
Thursday, June 14, 6-8PM

5:30PM Talk by Zak Kyes
6-8PM Opening Reception and Book Launch

Additional events will be announced throughout the run of the show.

For more information about the events, or to RSVP, visit: www.grahamfoundation.org/public_events.

ABOUT THE GRAHAM FOUNDATION

Founded in 1956, the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts makes project-based grants to individuals and organizations and produces public programs to foster the development and exchange of diverse and challenging ideas about architecture and its role in the arts, culture, and society.

The Graham Foundation was created by a bequest by Ernest R. Graham (1866–1936), a prominent Chicago architect who was a protégé of Daniel Burnham.

THE MADLENER HOUSE

Since 1963, the Graham Foundation has been located in the Madlener House, a 9,000 square foot Prairie-style mansion located in the historic Gold Coast neighborhood of Chicago. The work of architect Richard E. Schmidt and designer Hugh M. G. Garden, the house was built in 1901–02. In its compact, cubic massing the house is related to the German neoclassical work of Karl Friedrich Schinkel and his followers in Berlin, but in many of its details clearly reveals the influence of Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright.

EXHIBITION LOCATION, HOURS & ACCESSIBILITY

Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts
Madlener House
4 West Burton Place
Chicago, IL 60610
www.grahamfoundation.org

Gallery Hours: Wednesday to Saturday, 11AM to 5PM; every third Thursday of the month, 11AM to 8PM. Group tours available. Admission: Free

The Graham Foundation will offer public tours of *Zak Kyes Working With...* every Saturday at 2PM. Saturday tours do not require reservations and are free and open to the public. Tours begin in the foyer on the first floor and last approximately 30 minutes.

Accessibility: Galleries are located on the first, second, and third floors of the Madlener House. The second and third floors are only accessible by stairs. The first floor of is accessible via an outdoor lift. Please call 312.787.4071 to make arrangements.

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High-resolution digital images and exhibition text are available on the press section of our website; email Ellen Hartwell Alderman at ealderman@grahamfoundation.org for the press login or additional information. Press tours available by appointment.

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