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JAN TICHY

Selected Press

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Jan Tichy at the Museum of Contemporary Photography | Art review

"1979:1–2012:21" revisits the MoCP's collection

By Lauren Weinberg

Published: November 22, 2012



With almost 500 prints, Dorothea Lange—the photographer whose *Migrant Mother* became an icon of the Great Depression—is the most represented artist in the Museum of Contemporary Photography's collection. The museum's largest piece is Chinese artist Shi Guorui's *Shanghai 22–23 Oct 2005*, a camera-obscure photograph of the Shanghai skyline that is more than 12' long. Its smallest, Walker Evans's untitled 1928–29 photo of a metal grate, is a mere 1" x 1.25".

Until "1979:1–2012:21: Jan Tichy Works with the MoCP Collection" took the measure of the museum's holdings, visitors had little sense the MoCP owns almost 11,000 photographs, videos and other works. But this ingenious exhibition hints at the nature and broad scope of these assets, while reminding visitors that any collection is skewed by personal taste—and luck: Lange's work came to the museum from her stepdaughter, who lives in Chicago.

Last year, Tichy, a Chicago artist who teaches at SAIC, began working to make the MoCP's collection more accessible. Aided by graduate photography students from local schools, he revamped the museum's website, making it easy to search the archive by artist, keyword and medium. He transformed the MoCP's large windows at the southwest corner of Michigan Avenue and Harrison Street into the new Cornerstone Gallery, where flat-screen monitors flash digital exhibitions organized by guest curators.

Tichy also contributes videos of his own to “1979:1–2012:21,” which are unfortunately outshone by the photographs he highlights. However, this show convinces viewers that curating can be an artistic pursuit.

The title, which refers to the museum’s first and most recent acquisitions, reflects the structure of its first section. Tichy pairs several photographs, including Shi’s and Evans’s, based on the collection’s extremes. Others are linked by form or subject matter. Tichy’s choices demonstrate that conceptual and documentary photographs coexist in the collection, which encompasses abstractions as well as images of people, landscapes and infrastructure. One of my favorite pairings pits the tough teens in Diane Arbus’s *Two Girls in Matching Bathing Suits, Coney Island, N.Y. (1967)* against the more vulnerable-looking subject of Rineke Dijkstra’s portrait *Maya, Herzliya, Israel, November 21, 1999*, offering two different but equally striking views of young womanhood.

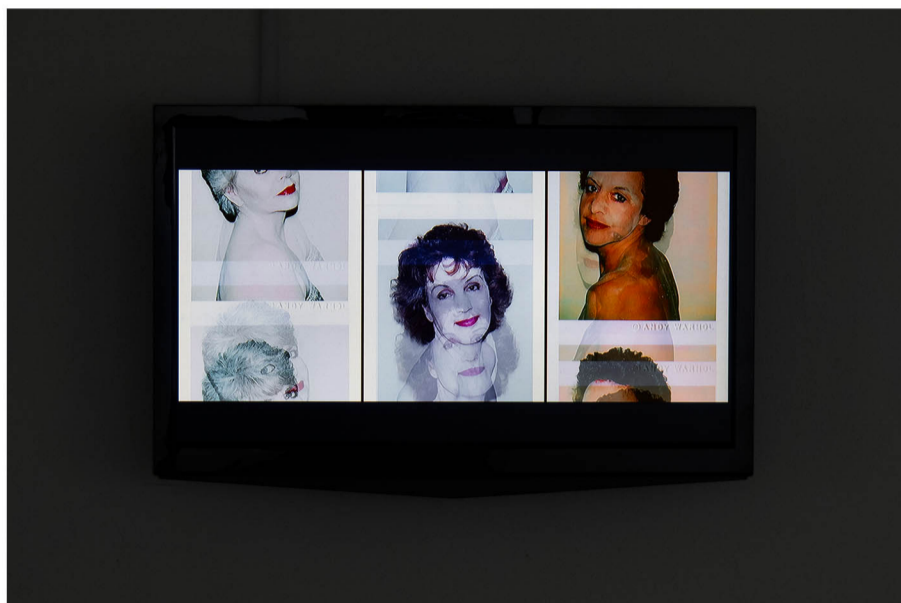
On the mezzanine level, Tichy presents a dozen “significant yet relatively under-used” photographs recommended by museum staff who have worked with the collection for at least five years. Chicago-based Terry Evans’s lovely but disturbing color photo *Field Museum, swan, 1891 (2001)* captures the taxidermied bird bent double, its graceful neck wrapped to its body with translucent fabric. It hangs near Harlem Renaissance photographer James Van Der Zee’s regal portrait of *A Member of Garvey’s African Legion with His Family (1924)*. I wish Tichy had shared the MoCP employees’ explanations for their recommendations, but in choosing these 12 from a larger pool, he subsumes them into his curatorial and conceptual vision.

Local photographers—including Chicago School leaders Aaron Siskind and Harry Callahan, their influential students Ken Josephson and Barbara Crane, and younger contemporary artists such as Jason Lazarus—are ubiquitous in “1979:1–2012:21.” Tichy fills the Print Study Room with a salon-style selection from Changing Chicago, a 1987 initiative that commissioned 33 hometown photographers to document the city. Their explorations of race and class couldn’t be more timely. By excavating the MoCP’s archives, Tichy renders them more relevant than ever before.



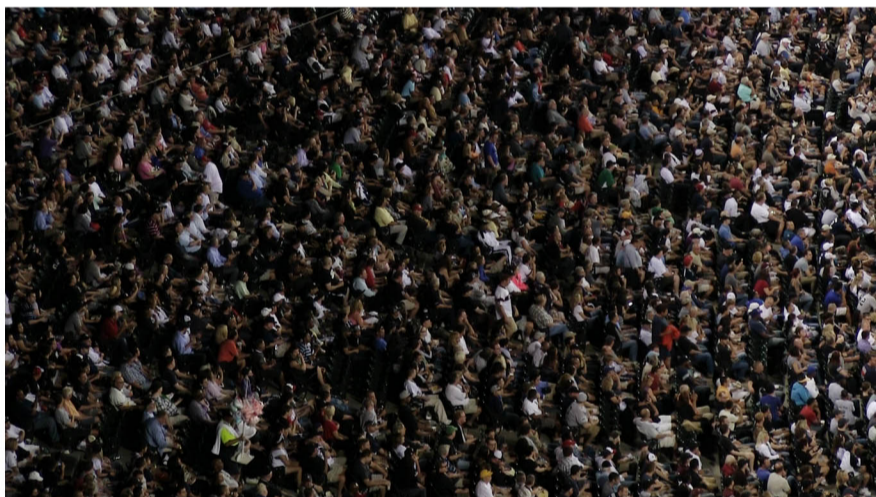
photograph

Jan Tichy: 1979:1 - 2012:21 at the Museum of Contemporary Photography



Still of Jan Tichy, *Polaroids (Warhol)*, 2012, video. Courtesy Museum of Contemporary Photography

It is the special paradox of an artwork-on-paper public collection that its holdings must sit in storage, out of view and mostly inaccessible, for long-term safekeeping. Light is the generative material of photography, but light exposure is a photographic print's slow death. At 33 years old, the [Museum of Contemporary Photography](#) is asking a lot of introspective questions, just as any ambitious and self-reflective 30-something might do. Specifically, how can it transform its identity, which is rooted in the dustbin of conventional museum practices, into a relevant, engaging public persona? In answer, the MoCP has commissioned multimedia artist Jan Tichy to pry through the museum's 11,000 collected works, its print study room, its programming, its staff's biases, its legacy and its future.



Still of Jan Tichy, *Changing Chicago*, 2012 video. Courtesy Museum of Contemporary Photography

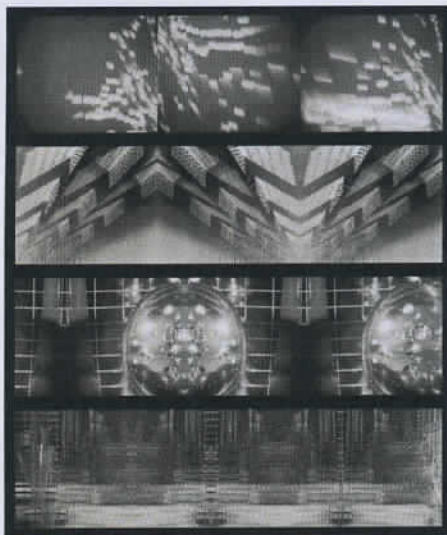
Institutions wishing to analyze the efficacy of their public access typically commission expensive consultant groups, who often return generic recommendations. To its credit, the MoCP entrusted Tichy to find the cracks, strengths, and redundancies in its galleries, collection, and website, for which he produced a museum-wide intervention (on view through December 23). His creative solutions are critical rather than practical. To provide access to the museum's 11,000 photos in storage, Tichy produced a video that's a 7.5-minute scream (*Collection*, 2012) through all 11,000 artworks, organized from lightest to darkest tones. The eye cannot keep up, nor can the video monitor, so that images blur and layer like shape-shifting ghosts.

A particularly successful intervention by Tichy takes place in the museum's educational print study room, where he has covered the walls with prints from the historic *Changing Chicago* series, a 1987 initiative in which 33 photographers documented Chicago life and society. On any given day in the study center, which is frequented by photo instructors and classes, lessons are now framed by more than 200 images of vernacular city scenes by classic Chicago photographers. Tichy added his own works, too: seven video portraits of contemporary Chicago street life that celebrate the pleasures of people watching.

The commissioning of Tichy for this museum-wide overhaul seems, at first, curious. Tichy, a Czech artist formerly of Tel Aviv, has lived and worked in Chicago for only five years; what should we learn about our own history from an outsider? But it turns out Tichy was the ideal interloper, for Chicago's photography scene, and the city's lasting international contributions have come primarily from non-natives. Aaron Siskind—whose iconic work Tichy manipulates in the show—moved from NYC to Chicago in 1951 and revolutionized the city's camera presence. The MoCP's own founder, Charles H. Traub, is from Louisville, Kentucky. Indeed, Chicago is an immigrant city and a diverse cultural hub—and, as Tichy shows us, its museums are open for everyone.

By Jason Foumberg
Fri, 11/09/2012

Artist Insights: *Jan Tichy*



Born in Prague, artist Jan Tichy lives and works in Chicago and teaches at the School of the Art Institute (SAIC). This fall, several impressive projects coincide at area art institutions throughout Chicago at the Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP), the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), Expo Chicago, the Art Institute of Chicago, and Richard Gray Gallery. CGN's Laura Miller met with Tichy to hear about all that's happening for the artist-educator this season.

LM: Tell me about working with the Museum of Contemporary Photography for the past year on a project involving their collection.

JT: Last year MoCP curator Karen Irvine asked me to consider new ways of interpreting their collection of more than 12,000 images and to create an exhibition that would explore it from a different perspective. MoCP was one of the first museums to upload digital images of their collection to their website as a way to connect with the public. I realized soon that the access and search tools are quite inappropriate for an interaction with this amazing digital archive. So, I considered ways to improve the access to the online collection and decided to create a think tank of Chicago MFA students (Columbia College, SAIC, UofC, UIC) that would bring updated perspectives on how to identify and develop strategies for better online interaction. We introduced tagging applications, web design strategies and interactive elements that will hopefully give better access to a greater community.

While coming to work at MoCP I realized that the museum itself is not really accessible/visible from the street, despite its prominent Michigan Avenue location; many Chicagoans don't even know about it. So, I proposed to establish a digital gallery on the outside of the museum. Two large monitors will be installed on MoCP's exterior walls at the corner of Michigan and Harrison. The digital galleries will display exhibitions from the collection, curated specifically for that purpose by a wide range of curators from around the world. My exhibition there this fall will explore the collection using my own



Left: *Things To Come* (1933-2012), video installation, 6 hours, 20 min, Jan Tichy & László Moholy-Nagy. Photo credit Jan Tichy.

Right: *Cornstones Digital Galleries - MoCP*, curated digital exhibitions from the collection. Photo credit Jan Tichy.

time-based tools of video and projection and will hopefully expose some hidden jewels.

What else can we expect from you this fall?

At Expo Chicago I'm really excited for the U.S. premier of *Things To Come* (1936-2012), a three-channel video installation made from 80 seconds of never before exhibited film footage that László Moholy-Nagy created in 1936 in London. H.G. Wells commissioned Moholy-Nagy for five and half minutes of footage for his visionary sci-fi film *Things To Come* and used just above a minute, not even giving credits. I came across the only existing footage through his daughter Hattula Moholy-Nagy when working on an exhibition design for his show at Loyola University Museum of Art three years ago. It took me some time to realize the potential hidden in these film snippets; using Moholy-Nagy's analog techniques in digital media with the initial H.G. Wells criteria, I hope to bring new life to it.

I have older works in group-exhibitions this fall at the Museum of Contemporary Art and Richard Gray Gallery. For the Art Institute of Chicago's Ando Gallery, I'm working on a site specific installation to coincide with an exhibition of contemporary Japanese garments from SAIC's Fashion Resource Center. Outside of Chicago I'll be participating in this fall's Architecture Biennale in Venice in the Israeli Pavilion and working with No Longer Empty in NYC.

You've been involved in several large-scale collaborative projects with local college students, community members, and art institutions - 2011's powerful Project Cabrini Green, 2009's Lighting the Crown Hall at the IIT, now the MoCP project, among others. How do these collaborations evolve?

As an artist and educator I believe in a creative collaboration between faculty and students as one of the models of successful art education, a theory that Moholy-Nagy was practicing in Chicago 60 years ago. I also share the belief, formulated and practiced by curator and educator Mary Jane Jacobs, that in the contemporary art world, art schools offer a great platform to develop professional

art productions. *Project Cabrini Green* is a good example of how this model benefits students, the institution and the community as well as an artist and a commercial gallery. The project required huge amounts of time and involvement. Together with Efrat Appel we collaborated with 25 dedicated students and faculty from SAIC to develop and create all the different layers of the project and worked with over 100 teenagers from four after school programs in Cabrini Green to create the content. It wouldn't be possible without the active support of Richard Gray Gallery and the administration of SAIC. Including the MCA and CHA there were over 200 people involved in the project.

How did you make the transition to Chicago?

It was actually very easy, maybe because I moved from Prague to Jerusalem when I was 19. During my MFA studies at Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Tel Aviv, I participated in a collaborative project in Helsinki initiated by SAIC. Eventually I was accepted to their Sculpture program. I finished my MFA at SAIC in 2009 and stayed to teach at the Department of Art and Technology Studies. I fell for Chicago from the beginning, and the city was kind to me. I had the extraordinary opportunity to create projects for a few signature buildings like Crown Hall, the Hancock, Spertus, Montgomery Ward, and Cabrini Green. There are more under way (Chicago Cultural Center in 2014.)

After living, working, and exhibiting around the world, how do you find Chicago for art?

The way Chicago is built - physically, socially and culturally - there's space and opportunities for many cultural activities, and plenty of people want to do things. I serve on advisory boards of ACRE and threewalls, non-profits that provide the local art community with accessible spaces and rich programming. These organizations, like many other independent art spaces, apartment and pop-up galleries, are the vital source of culture for the community and an important spawn of the next generation of cultural producers.

www.jantichy.com

Jan Tichy

GORDON GALLERY 2
4 Natan Hachacham Street
August 23–September 15

In March 2011 the last high-rise building of Cabrini-Green, a public housing development on Chicago's Near North Side, was demolished and 134 deserted apartments turned into rubble. In its prime, the complex had housed over 15,000 people. Over the years, however, gang violence, neglect, and poor conditions drove residents away. Days before the demolition began, Jan Tichy installed 134 flickering LED boxes in the empty spaces of the final standing building; during the monthlong process, these boxes blinked every day from 7 PM to 1 AM with unique patterns. The lights could have been read as SOS signals. In fact, their beat was determined by a conversion of human voices: local youth reading poems they had written about destruction and urban decay. The poems were penned during a series of community workshops Tichy organized with his partner, Efrat Appel. The poems, the nearly 700-hour-long video, the LED boxes, the workshops, and the intervention in the public space have all become part of Tichy's "Project Cabrini Green," 2011.



Jan Tichy, *Project Cabrini Green (feed)*, 2011, video, color, 700 hours. From "Project Cabrini Green," 2011.

This exhibition marks the debut of the work in its full capacity in Tel Aviv, and the small spaces of Gordon Gallery are filled with voices of teenagers reading their poems. A computer allows visitors to choose which poem to hear. A different computer provides a visualization of the building's grid. Behind a black curtain, some surviving LED boxes are placed on the floor. Suddenly, one of them flickers and offers a latent message—an echo of destruction that takes hold of the space. The various threads of this project seem to connect to one another through this dying box: As "Cabrini Green" delves into questions regarding gentrification and social stratification, it also presents a surprising emergence of the past. The beaten box thus appears as what is on the verge of unavoidable downfall.

— Rotem Rozental

JUN 11 2012

ART NEW ENGLAND

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Auerbach Library,
WADSWORTH ATHENEUM
600 MAIN STREET
HARTFORD, CONN. 06105

REVIEWS: *Connecticut*

JAN TICHY/MATRIX 164

Wadsworth Athenaeum • Hartford, CT • www.wadsworthatheneum.org • Through August 5, 2012

Facing towards the wall, the five nineteenth-century portrait busts that internationally exhibiting Jan Tichy (b. Prague, active Chicago) has arranged in his *Installation No. 14 (Austin)* are like a line of displaced aristocrats, apprehended at the border as they flee the revolution at their backs. In the darkened room they seemingly peer into the past, disdainful of us, the mere passersby.

Tichy is here referring to the institution of the Wadsworth itself as well as one of its most inventive twentieth-century directors, A. Everett ("Chick") Austin. One segment of *MATRIX 164* is a domestic illusion, where a video projection manufactures both a window and a history, framed by two actual eighteenth-century paintings of the Archangel Michael and a Venetian festival. There are fragile boundaries of place and time, with a latticed ceiling image that duplicates a real space elsewhere in the building, and a Mies van der Rohe chair that straddles being a seat and an exhibited object. Another room contains a miniature dream city with a continuous narrative of light. It

expands from what might be a single illuminated memorial event to the traffic motion of night streets to Weegee flash photographing mafia corpses or spelunkers with headlamps in the caves of an abandoned Oz, then starship scanning beams playing across the base of the landscape. All this bright animation is cadenced by a theremin soundtrack that ends in a nearly unbearable buzz.

In the final space, there is a film noir prelude in which one wall that initially presents as a nighttime cityscape transforms into a wasteland that might be an unmarked battlefield, with power lines in the distance. On the opposite wall, the metamorphosis of a tide line along the shore yields only flickers of brightness at the wave crests. Both of these opposing programs at either end of the room alternate with doors of light sliding open and closed, like Barnett Newman's zips in motion. Those vertical patterns of division are countered within the gallery space by filaments stretched diagonally



Jan Tichy, *Installation No. 14 (Austin)*, 2012 (detail). Two HD video projections and objects from the collection of the Wadsworth Athenaeum. Projection running time: 10 min. Photo: Allen Phillips/Wadsworth Athenaeum.

from floor to ceiling that transmit the movies as beads of light along the transparent strands. On the two remaining walls, images of a carved Egyptian figure of Horus face off with a moth that is duplicating itself in a mirror. This is a bleak memory's biography.

—Stephen Vincent Kobasa

Jan Tichy: Matrix 164 At Wadsworth

Czech-American Artist Creates Multidimensional Video-Audio Installations

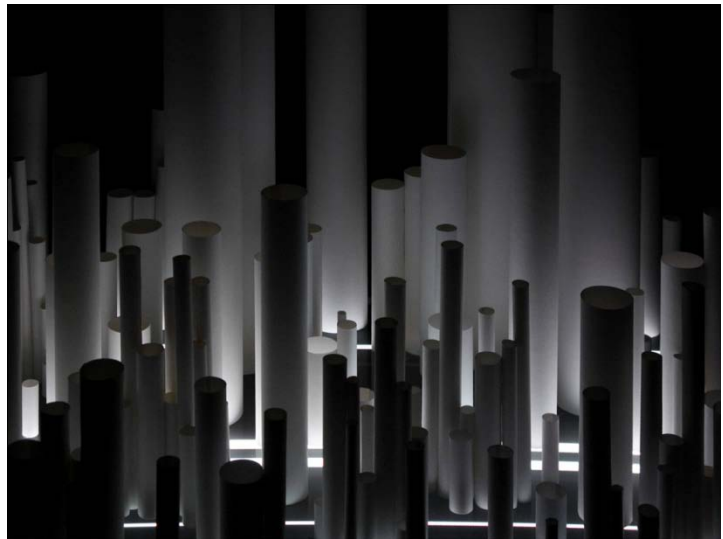
By SUSAN DUNNE, sdunne@courant.com

The Hartford Courant

9:46 AM EDT, April 18, 2012

Is "Installation No. 6 (Tubes)" a cityscape? It is an organ? It is just an abstract organism? Jan Tichy, the creator of the artwork, says it is any of those, all of those, none of those.

"The composition is open enough that a person can read it in different ways," Tichy says.



The art installation sits in a very dark room furnished with two benches. The work is composed of an old television, sitting screen upwards and playing a continuous 10-minute loop of static, like when old TVs had problems with horizontal hold. On top of the TV are a artistically arranged series of white tubes, varying in height and width. The shining white lights of the static shine upwards through the tube construction. All the while, magnified audio static crescendoes, creates an otherworldly visual and aural impression.

Tichy is the newest artist in the Wadsworth Atheneum's MATRIX series. "Jan Tichy: Matrix 164" is made up of three installations. It will be up through Sunday, Aug. 5.

Tichy, a native of Prague who is based in Chicago, says he often appropriates images of urban landscapes into his work. "I use architecture to speak about history, society, politics in an abstract form," he says. "But I want to leave it open for interpretation. ... I want to explore the connection between light and sound."

He does the same in the next room, the exhibition's largest and most complex installation, and also the most site-specific. "Installation No. 14 (Austin)" is an homage to Arthur Everett "Chick" Austin, the Atheneum's director from 1927 to 1944.

For that installation, a projector casts an image of sunrise at Austin's home on Scarborough Street in Hartford. (The film was shot over three hours, but has been compressed to 10 minutes, on a loop.) That dark corner projection area is flanked by two classic paintings — "Feast of Santa Maria Della Salute," 1720, by Johan Richter, and "The Archangel Michael," 1700, by

Cristóbal Villalpando — and five classic marble busts, installed tightly together and with their faces to the wall. Across the room, on a platform, sits a Brno chair designed by Ludwig Mies Van Der Rohe, which was used in the Austin era as office furniture and later was added to the museum's collections. Above the chair is a projected light design resembling the ceiling of the Avery Court.

Tichy says he put that installation in the first room that visitors enter for a reason. "You have to pass through this room three times. Eventually you will have to see it from all three angles," he says. "You walk through to get to this room and you see it from one angle. Then you go to the room on the other side and see it from another angle. Then you come in to see it and see it from this angle."

Tichy was inspired to make the film when he came to the Atheneum and discovered it was the country's oldest public art museum, and that Austin was a revered figure at the Wadsworth. "I'm interested in collections. What does it mean to make a collection? Who decides what? What is preserved for future generations, creating a history for them?" he says. "Being the oldest museum provides a full range of American museum practice, and Chick Austin was an interesting entry point."

The two paintings were acquired during the Austin era; at the time of its purchase, the Richter was believed to be the work of Luca Carlevarijs.

And as for the turned-away busts? "We rarely see them this way, from behind," Tichy says. "That's not something you're supposed to see."

The exhibit's final piece, "Installation No. 11," features two wall-sized screens, facing each other, running video on 10-minute loops. One shows the Judea desert. The other shows the Mediterranean sea. As the recognizable images fade from view, they are replaced by abstract images, shot through with lines projected through cords strung floor-to-ceiling. Like the marble busts, several photos of a falcon statue face toward the exhibit door, and one photo of a moth faces the falcons.

"All his work springs out of darkness," says Patricia Hickson, the museum's Emily Hall Tremaine Curator of Contemporary Art. "The moth is symbolic, a creature that lives in dark but is attracted to the light, but the light destroys it."

Tichy says his fascination with light-based installations was a gradual process. "I started with photography, looking at the world through a lens. At a certain point, I moved to video, staying at two dimensions but adding the dimension of time. Then sculptural elements started to emerge."

"JAN TICHY: MATRIX 164" will be at Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, 600 Main St. in Hartford, until Sunday, Aug. 5. Hours are Wednesday to Friday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., weekends 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Details: <http://www.wadsworthatheneum.org>.



With lights, poems, teens say goodbye to Cabrini

April 23, 2011
Sharon Cohen

(AP) CHICAGO (AP) — Every day at sundown, the gutted shell of the last Cabrini Green public housing tower takes on a ghostly aura as lights start flickering sporadically from 15 floors of empty rooms.

It looks like a distress signal — but it's really a goodbye.

This is the final Cabrini high rise to meet the wrecker's ball, the end of an era in Chicago, where public housing has long been a symbol of every form of inner-city agony: crumbling bases for vicious street gangs, darkened stairways reeking of urine, gunfire echoing in the night.

Cabrini had more than its share of horror: A 7-year-old shot dead while walking to school, holding his mother's hand. A young girl raped, beaten and poisoned by insecticide. Two policemen gunned down by snipers while on foot patrol.

But Cabrini had its happy memories, too: Block parties in the July heat. Special Monday reunions for old-timers coming back to visit. Girls eating sticky grape Popsicles, jumping double-dutch.

To mark the end, a Prague-born artist and teacher enlisted a group of teens, many who lived in and around Cabrini, to write poems about the project, the demolition or the meaning of home and community. As they read their words, a computer program recorded their voices, generating patterns from LED lights that beamed from 134 vacant apartments. As the tower falls, there are fewer lights.

The words, though, will live on.

Some are raw:

"What they called hell, We had named home. ...
You can't click your shoes twice,
And disappear.
There's no escape from the pain that's here."

Some are nostalgic:

"Babies crying, sisters arguing, animals cooing,
And the smell and sizzle of chicken frying.
Yet and still, it's unpredictable.
My Home."

Some are angry:

"You move people out
Their comfort zone and
Don't realize they hate it ...
You shatter
The memories and bonds
That were just the greatest."

The idea for this lights-and-sound farewell came from Jan Tichy, a faculty member at the Art Institute of Chicago, who sensed a historic moment: It's not just the last tower of the notorious project to fall, but the final demolition of 82 public housing high rises for families — buildings that had become some of the poorest, most segregated communities in America.

Cabrini, once home to about 15,000 people, was a concrete reminder of the nation's urban policy failures. It attracted a lot of attention, partly because of its proximity to Chicago's exclusive Gold Coast; in the early 1980s, then-Mayor Jane Byrne also made a brief — and much-publicized — move into an apartment there to dramatize living conditions.



Tichy says when he arrived in Chicago four years ago he immediately sensed a segregated city. As he researched its history of public housing, he realized his interest in using art to deliver a social or political message — in this case, that these buildings were a failure — meshed with an idea for honoring the residents.

"People now recognize that's not the way to fight poverty ... ," he says. "Before we take another step, before we build another vertical ghetto, let's think for a moment — what does it mean to build these houses? When you go to hear the poems, the kids are basically asking the same thing. ... It's not the architecture that made a ghetto out of a community. It was us who are responsible for that. And it's us who are responsible to do something about it."

Tichy decided to tap the next generation for his project. He approached housing officials and they liked it.

"We didn't want everyone's final image to be the demolition," says Jadine Chou, the Chicago Housing Authority's senior vice president of asset management. "We wanted there to be some of memorial tribute to the families. (This reminds everybody it's not really the bricks and mortar, it's really all about the people and the community."

Tichy and his partner, Efrat Appel, a social worker, recruited kids from ages 10 to 18 who were participating in writing, mentoring and after-school programs or members of a Cabrini marching band. They held workshops, they discussed slam poetry. Then the kids, 110 in all, sat down to write. Some explored the impact of racism and dislocation on their lives; others focused on Cabrini itself.

Jasmine Dilworth, 17, reminisced about playing with her cousins at Cabrini. She says it was devastating seeing her home disappear — she's the only "poet" to have lived in the last tower.

"I'll never have a place to go back to and show my children and say, 'I grew up there,'" she says. "I feel like they're erasing my history."

The poems, she says, remind the public "we do have a voice and we do have feelings about them tearing down our homes." As for her own? "Defeated, I guess," Dilworth says with a sigh, adding she believes the demolition is intended to take advantage of valuable land, not improve the lives of residents. (The fate of the property has not yet been determined.)

Charles Kilpatrick, a 15-year-old who grew up in Cabrini's row houses (an older section of the project), wrote about the deep bond among residents, which many kids say is often overlooked.

"I feel like Cabrini is forever," he wrote. There's no way we can be apart. ... We all stuck together as one and said: We love Cabrini until the end."

"It's part of my identity," Kilpatrick says. "I'm proud to say I'm from there."

Dantrell Pearson's poem, "Still Kicking" is an ode to survival and a rejection of violence. Pearson has a special tie to Cabrini: His mother once lived there and named him after 7-year-old Dantrell Davis, who was killed by a gang sniper in 1992 while walking just 100 feet to his school.

That tragedy scarred Cabrini. But Appel, the social worker, says many kids see a gap between the media image of Cabrini and reality. The poems fulfill "their wish to be heard more fully, not as people want to describe them from the outside," she says, "but as somebody who wants to be counted and has something important to say."

Justus White, a 16-year-old in the Cabrini band, is among them.

His poem, "Why," addresses stereotypes he knew from experience: He recalls how once while walking a mile from Cabrini with friends, police stopped them and told them to get back to their own neighborhood. The message, he says, seemed to be: "As soon as black kids come around, it's trouble."

"I just really want to spread a deep message to this earth," White wrote, "to say that not all black kids are born the same at birth."

White has been watching the demolition, sad to see Cabrini go, comforted to be part of its final days.

"When me and my friends walked by, just seeing the lights made my heart glow," he says. "There's a piece of me in that building."

Sharon Cohen, a Chicago-based national writer for The Associated Press, can be reached at features@ap.org.

The New York Times

Cabrini-Green to Exit With Poetry and Lights

Chicago News Cooperative

By KARI LYDERSEN
Published: March 26, 2011



Mi'yanna Watkins, 16, records her story of living in the Cabrini-Green housing projects for a light show that will accompany the demolition of the complex's last high rise.

The last high-rise at Cabrini-Green is coming down starting Wednesday, stirring strong emotions among former residents who remember the troubled housing project as their home and community, as well as a place of menace. Those feelings will emerge in an unusual light display that will accompany the demolition.

Earlier this month, young people who lived in and around the project gathered nearby at the Seward Park field house to record poetry that will determine the rhythms of pulsating colored light beamed from the windows of the 15-story building. The lights will be extinguished, apartment by apartment, as the high-rise comes down.

Students and faculty members from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago developed the custom LED lights and computer software that fires the lights in sync with the teenagers' voices. Individually programmed lights in each apartment will reflect off the multicolored walls.

The project was created by Jan Tichy, an instructor at the Art Institute, and Efrat Appel, a social worker, to commemorate Cabrini and the experiences of former residents, most of whom are scattered throughout the city.



Students and former residents record their stories as the basis for the light show.
José Moré/Chicago News Cooperative

Although the housing project was dilapidated and infamous for violence, drugs and gangs, former residents also remember a strong sense of community.

“Cabrini wasn’t all that bad, even though now people make it seem like it was,” said Mi’Yanna Watkins, 16, a member of the Cabrini Marching Band who lived there until fifth grade. “There were block parties.

There were Old School Mondays, where everyone would come back; people who had been gone for 25 years would get together. I remember my first Christmas there. And this little area called the Blacktop, where I learned to ride a bike.”

Mr. Tichy and Ms. Appel helped teenagers from the marching band and several other after-school programs write poems about what Cabrini meant to them.

As he hunched over a microphone at the field house, Charles Kilpatrick, a lanky teenager, recited:

*When I moved in, I felt like I was already here;
But once it fell apart, I felt like shedding a tear.
They really don’t know what it feels like to be pushed away;
The government is taking our homes; they think it’s O.K.*

Some of the poems bemoan the city’s Plan for Transformation, which called for relocating displaced public-housing residents to mixed-income neighborhoods, including new developments at the same sites. Critics say the process has been poorly administered because it has placed some residents in far-flung, often high-crime neighborhoods or suburbs.

“My poem is about feeling lost, because they just spread people out everywhere,” said Raphael Garrett, 20.

Despite the biting edge to some poems, Jadine Chou, director of asset management for the Chicago Housing Authority, said agency officials were excited about the project.

“This is a wonderful way to let our young residents express themselves and say farewell to the final high-rise,” Ms. Chou said.

Real-time video of the building, at 1230 North Burling Street, and recordings of the teenagers' poetry will be available on a Web site (www.projectcabrinigreen.org) and in an exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art for the duration of the demolition.

Evian Bridgeman, 18, a member of the Cabrini Marching Band who will attend Jackson State University in Mississippi on a scholarship, said he hoped the light display would make passers-by think about "the long legacy of Cabrini-Green in Chicago."

Mr. Bridgeman said he saw the demolition as a beginning both for the neighborhood and for the former residents who had started new lives throughout the city.

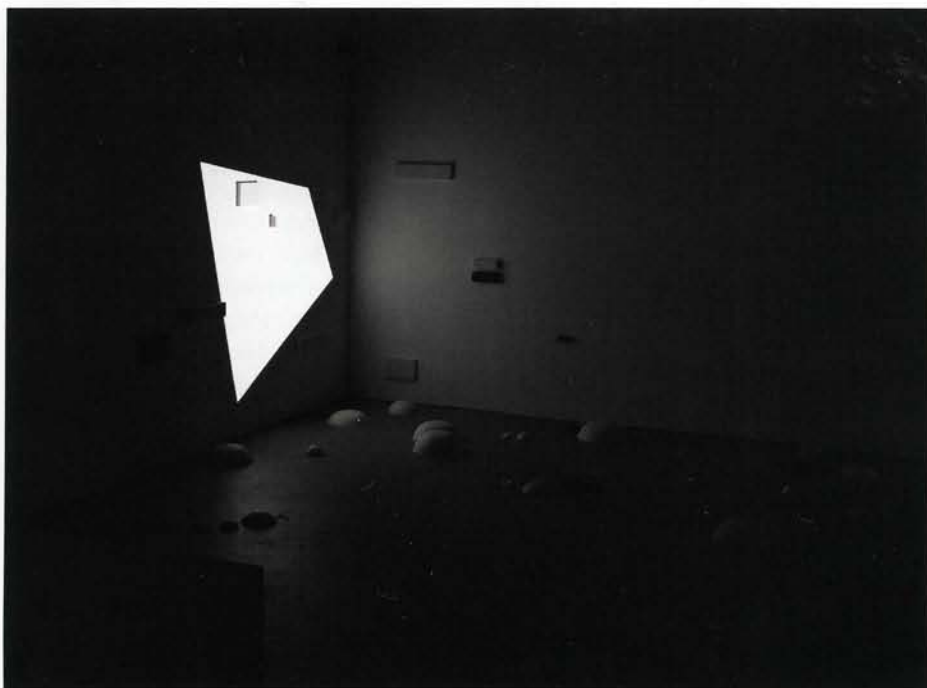
"It's bitter," he said. "And it's sweet."



Jan Tichy, center, developed the project. *José Moré/Chicago News Cooperative*

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A version of this article appeared in print on March 27, 2011, on page A25A of the National edition.



Jan Tichy:

'Video installation': a two-word combination that leaves me cold, even a little nauseous, whenever I read it in a press release or hear it uttered by an artist describing the contents of an upcoming show. It's rare that they're any good, these things, or even anything better than dreadful. Not so with Jan Tichy's installations, which I first encountered at the Helena Rubinstein Pavilion for Contemporary Art in Tel Aviv, and then again at Art TLV, the first Tel Aviv biennial, both in September 2009.

At the pavilion (where Tichy was showing in a generous exhibition of a number of Israeli all-stars: Yael Bartana, Nahum Tevet, Guy Ben Ner) his *Installation No. 3* (2007) was located in a darkened downstairs area and looked at first like nothing more than a dramatically illuminated paper model of a simple architectural skeleton. Then I noticed that the illumination was coming from a video projector, and that the model's purpose was to provide a shadow structure on the wall on which the video's subtle silhouette animations could be seen to climb, walk, fall, etc. It was,

quite simply, the most imaginative combination of projected shadow-play, sculpture and physical space I have encountered. *Installation No. 6* (*Tubes*) (2009), the piece from the biennial, condensed this assemblage to a series of white paper tubes standing on top of a flat-screen monitor. The animation here was abstract, à la Hans Richter. The effect was equally potent.

Tichy's work is not without its politics too, as a number of his assemblages have invoked architectures and topographies that are intelligible only in terms of conflict, with a sensitivity that the artist's Czech heritage and Israeli education have no doubt honed. This month, Tichy brings that sensitivity to the illumination of the last building of Chicago's long-ago-failed Cabrini-Green housing project – a model, like the notorious Pruitt-Igoe in St Louis (whose destruction, according to architecture critic Charles Jencks, marked the day that Modernism died), of twentieth-century urban policy gone awry. As the building is demolished over the course of many days, the LED lights Tichy has arranged to rhythmically flash in all of its windows will go with it, an allegory of ideology and enlightenment if ever there was one.

by
Jonathan
T.D. Neil





INTERNATIONAL EDITION

THE ART NEWSPAPER

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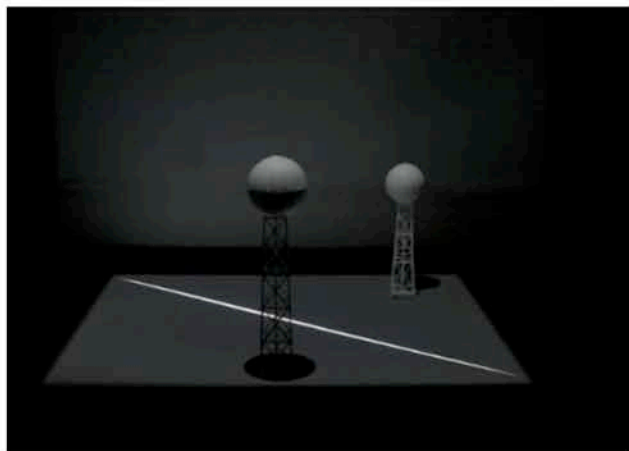
LONDON NEW YORK TURIN VENICE MILAN ROME

ART BASEL DAILY EDITION 18-20 JUNE 2010

Art market report

It's about more than Matisse

Blue-chip dealers have been using Basel as an opportunity to build the potential stars of the future



Chicago's Richard Gray gallery is giving Czech artist Jan Tichy a platform by presenting his 2008 architecturally inspired Installation No. 4 (Towers) at Art Unlimited, priced \$25,000

“You want to give the artists a platform”

While millions of euros-worth of work by the world's most famous artists such as Picasso, Miró and Matisse were changing hands in Basel this week, there are also lesser-known

names on show with several dealers using the fair to launch their latest signings.

New York and Brussels-based dealer Barbara Gladstone (A1) is devoting prime positions on her stand to the latest artist to join her roster: Cecilia Edefalk, 56, who is well known in her native Sweden, but much less so elsewhere. The dealer is showing the works in advance of Edefalk's debut exhibition with the gallery in New York this September. “There is such a high quality audience here,” said Gladstone. “We've got a lot of advance interest thanks to Art Basel.” The gallery sold out of her works, priced at \$10,000 each.

Using a similar strategy, Chicago's Richard Gray gallery (E7) presented Czech artist Jan Tichy's 2008 architecturally inspired video installation at Art Unlimited. The artist joined the gallery last year. The piece, *Installation No. 4 (Towers)*, an edition of five, is priced at \$25,000. The gallery sold two sets, with a third on reserve to an unnamed museum. “Does this strategy make financial sense? No,” said Paul Gray, whose gallery is best known for selling million-dollar modern and postwar works of art. “But it's not all about that. You want to give them a platform.”

His blue-chip sales made so far at the fair, including a 1947 grey-hued Picasso for around \$4m and a small bronze Giacometti bust for over \$2m, afford the gallery the opportunity to expose Tichy's work to a potential audience of 60,000.

The contemporary galleries are employing similar tactics. London-based Frith Street is showing an installation by the Raqs Media Collective, a group of Indian multimedia artists. “We made quite a commitment by bringing such a large piece, but we really wanted to introduce the artists,” said Charlotte Schepke. The gamble paid off—the work, *The Knots that Bind are the Knots*, 2010, sold to the insurance company Hiscox's collection for €45,000.

Casey Kaplan (N19) sold work by three new artists, including a sculpture by Marlo Pascual, *Untitled*, 2010, of actress Lucille Ball impaled on a coat-rack, which was the focal point of the stand. “We're doing a solo show of Pascual's work at Frieze so it was really important to have a striking work out front,” said Kaplan. The piece sold for \$18,000 to a trustee of the Dallas Museum of Art.

Los Angeles dealer Patrick Painter (P17) debuted sculptor Anthony James at the fair, whom the gallery will feature in an autumn show. “We wanted to generate some early buzz and to place some work in Europe,” said Michael Briggs of the gallery. James' *Birch*, 2010, a large installation, sold for \$125,000 to a German collector while a smaller piece, *Birch Wall*, 2010, sold for \$75,000 to a Swiss private collection.

But Art Basel's reputation for being the place that dealers bring works by the best, from modern masters such as Pollock and de Kooning to contemporary artists including Damien Hirst and the late Louise Bourgeois, remains unchanged, and overall the mood yesterday was positive. “It feels healthy, there is geographic and aesthetic diversity: dealers are making a big effort,” said Richard Armstrong, the director of the Guggenheim Museum, New York.

There have been strong sales across the board, although buyers continue to be more selective than in the boom. “The market's much better,” said Andrew Richards, director of New York's Marian Goodman Gallery (B13). “But it's never going to go back to where it was—that was a freak moment in time.” Pace Gallery (B20) also reported sales including Sterling Ruby's eye-catching, large-scale painting *SP110*, 2010, for \$80,000. “The volume of sales has been very high,” said gallery director James Lindon, although works above \$2.5m are taking longer to sell.

There were fewer Americans, perhaps because the fair does not overlap with the Venice Biennale this year. But those who did make the trip were caught up in the atmosphere. New York collectors Doreen and Gilbert Bassin came to the fair intending not to buy, but wound up with works by South African artist Mikhael Subotzky and the late US artist Dash Snow. “The gallerists are happy when they are selling, and they are selling,” said Doreen Bassin.

Despite the troubled euro, collectors from the continent were out in force. Dealers offering non-Western art also found demand. Shanghart (K17) sold Zeng Fanzhi's large, turbulent landscape for over \$1m to a European collector. “Last year we wouldn't have dared to bring such big, expensive work,” said Shanghart's Lorenz Helbling.

Lindsay Pollock
Charlotte Burns

Night Watchman

JAMES TRAINOR ON JAN TICHY

DIMONA: IT IS A BEAUTIFUL NAME for something that long refused to exist. Built secretly in Israel's Negev Desert in 1956, the Dimona nuclear facility was initially the stuff of rumor. Even US intelligence agencies didn't uncover its purpose until the 1960s, and for decades it was absent from any publicly available photographs or maps. To this day, the Israeli government will neither confirm nor deny that it is an atomic-weapon factory, preferring an official policy of "nuclear ambiguity." It was this paradoxical pinpoint uncertainty, the structure's quantum mechanical status of something simultaneously there and not there, that led Czech-born Israeli artist Jan Tichy to scour the Internet and other sources for images of the non-site in order to construct a paper model of it. This he placed in his installation *Dimona*, 2006, a pitch-black room with a narrow beam of light slowly passing over the model like a scanner, revealing one section at a time but never allowing a view of the whole.

Indeed, Tichy's entire project rests on this oscillation between site and non-site, known and unknown, seen and unseen. Growing up in cold-war Prague, Tichy learned the lesson of the proxy: He made paper models of skyscrapers, castles, even hot-air balloons, the cut-fold-and-paste kits of monuments and places reconstituting things of which he could have no direct

Cities never remain pristine, and Tichy revels in their accumulated residues and opacities.

experience himself. But he also mastered another lesson: how to lead a double life. The son of a man who was a nuclear physicist by day and an opponent of the Communist regime by night, Tichy learned to develop a public face and a private one, as part of a family of insiders that secretly remained moral and political outsiders. With this came the early realization that things are rarely as they seem, that apparently concrete structures can be paper-thin, as flimsy as any Potemkin village (or the Czech regime, which crumpled and dissolved without a shot during the Velvet Revolution).

When he immigrated to Tel Aviv in the mid-'90s (having discovered only in his late teens that he was Jewish), then studied at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, Tichy took this sense of double identity with him. The artist began engaging an array of sites that, like Dimona, have an ambiguous existence. His brooding, shadowy sculpture and light installations model such entities as Facility 1391, a secret high-security prison dubbed the Israeli Guantánamo, and the Dahaniya/Yasser Arafat International Airport in Gaza, whose terminal, control tower, and runways have been repeatedly bombarded, demolished, and rebuilt in a Sisyphean cycle of erasure and reconstitution. But unlike a Thomas Demand or a James Casebere, Tichy avoids the polemical charge of specific sites (and the narrow political readings this might invite) in favor of fostering a pervasive sense of unease, a twilight perception of hazy spaces and realms.

Not coincidentally, then, Tichy is attracted to the nocturnal—to what it conceals and perhaps divulges. Working in the studio until the wee hours, he got to know Tel Aviv by wandering home through its sleeping streets, his senses becoming attuned to its nighttime textures and narratives. He also began to notice that the airspace above the dormant Israeli metropolis was alive with bats. What began as a hobby became an amateur chiropterological study. Over a period of years, the artist photographed and catalogued the nightly acrobatics of Tel Aviv's hidden inhabitants. Like the bats themselves, Tichy was fairly blind, shooting into the dark sky and guessing at the trajectories of his quarry, never sure of capture until an image—floodlit and unearthly—resolved itself. But perhaps the most remarkable sight to appear in *Bats*, 2002–2007, presented as a series of eighty slides, is that of the creatures bombing the newly restored Bauhaus quarter of the city with a relentless spattering of guano. They ignominiously stain the brilliant

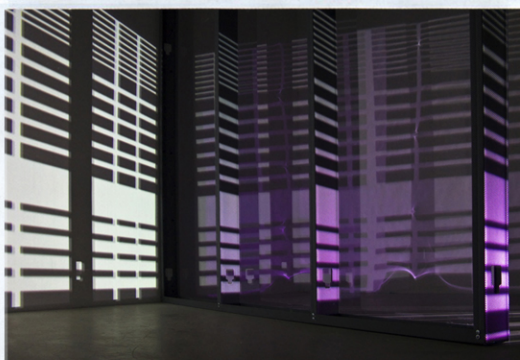


Jan Tichy, *Dimona*, 2006, paper, posters, text, video. Installation view, Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, 2009.

stucco walls of the White City—as the modernist core of Tel Aviv is called—the largest and densest concentration of Bauhaus-style architecture in the world, built when German-Jewish architects fled to the city in the 1930s and began to reimagine it in idealistic, Zionist-utopian terms. Tichy's *Bats* is a paean to the somewhat tarnished aspirations of that ideal dream metropolis, an ode to its inverse echo—the darkness that engulfs and undergirds even the most pristine cities.

As exiles go, of course, the Bauhaus brain drain was also a windfall for the US. While Harvard got Walter Gropius, Chicago got László Moholy-Nagy and Mies van der Rohe—bitter rivals, the former founding the Institute of Design and the latter helming the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT). Three years ago, Tichy left Tel Aviv to teach at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and his recent work has plunged into the conflicted legacies of modernist space that pervade his gritty new adoptive city: first with four installations at the Art Institute's Sullivan Galleries in the former Carson Pirie Scott department-store building, as part of the group show "Learning Modern" in September 2009, and one month later in a miniretrospective mounted by the Richard Gray Gallery on the gutted twenty-fourth floor of the iconic John Hancock Center.

For *Delineations*, 2009, in the Sullivan Galleries, Tichy, in collaboration with Helen Maria Nugent, built four room-size boxes. Like souped-up versions of El Lissitzky's radical exhibition displays of the 1920s, each of these spaces was activated by a different set of animated light projections. In one dark chamber, dots became lines, lines broadened into planes, and flat planes became complex folds as the beams of light were



From top: Jan Tichy, *Bats*, 2002–2007, one of eighty 35-mm slides from a two-channel slide projection, dimensions variable. Jan Tichy in collaboration with Helen Maria Nugent, *Delineations* (detail), 2009, five-channel video projection, acrylic screens, dimensions variable.

refracted into magenta parallelograms by transparent panes of Plexiglas (a material nod to Moholy-Nagy, Tichy's hero in the local clash of modernist titans). In another room, animations slowly cycled through series of oscillating ledger-book grids and gradually corrupted rectilinear patterns—deceptively simple abstractions that suggested a continuum of architectural reference points, from the finicky proportions of Adolf Loos, to Miesian steel skeletons, to soul-crushing public housing, to drab multistory parking garages. At the same time, the work's site in Louis Sullivan's famous Scott building marks the intersection of State and Madison streets—the 0,0 point for Chicago's gridiron plan, the great axis and grand meridian of the American heartland. Here, at this singular point, the grid and the box converge: As Tichy recently remarked, "The Scott department store was a giant box for selling more boxes," and these industrially standardized parameters of structure and container determined the scale of the commodities held within.

Delineations seems to restage these strictures of industrial production and the utopian projections that haunt them.

But it was in his aerie high above the streets, in the John Hancock Center, that Tichy seemed to have at last come home. Given the entire eerily vacant floor to work with (an imploding economy and a glut of office space making pop-up space possible), the artist blacked out all the windows, submerging the hastily stripped offices in a perpetual stygian night. If Warhol let the nighttime light of the Empire State Building determine the median exposure level in his epic *Empire* (1964)—beginning with the blinding glare of the setting sun and ending in complete darkness—in Tichy's high-rise netherworld, blackness became the baseline. Unmoored from day or night and the wintry workaday world far below, the passage of time was measured only in the circadian rhythms of each installation.

Installation No. 4 (Towers), 2008, offered a new twist on the term "black site." Set at the far end of a large but nearly pitch-black expanse of office space, with no sound but the ambient thrum of the building and its

strained creaking in the January gusts, two scale models of towers stood like sentinels. They could have been reconstructions of anything—microwave beacons, water towers, oil rigs—but their vaguely familiar structural typology seemed without discernible purpose. (Why were there two? Why was one smaller than the other?) This *mise-en-scène* gradually revealed itself within the surrounding gloom. An animated digital projection first defined a band of light between the two towers, then grew and brightened to describe a rectangular field. Initially bathed in this harsh white light, as if being clinically scrutinized from some fixed point in the sky, this unnatural and fleeting dawn cycled down into a cold lunar dusk. The gloaming quickly gave way to a still darker disk of shadow, cast by neither tower but by some larger unseen object, which slowly bled outward like an oil spill, engulfing the towers and plunging the scene back into eclipse. Indeed, one observer, an Iraqi native, insisted that these were the unforbearing extremes of light and dark-

ness of the Mesopotamian desert; in any case, one need only recall Colin Powell's UN Security Council presentation of evidentiary satellite imagery—depicting either a weather-balloon facility or a WMD laboratory in Iraq—to realize that seeing and knowing are two very distinct things.

Installation No. 8 (Hancock), 2009, was the counterweight to *Towers*, a digital light projection commissioned for the site that turned a segment of the Hancock's signature steel X cross-bracings—awkward, massive diagonal beams—into something ethereal, almost vertigo-inducing. In a small office, a triangle of light began to emerge in the corner behind a load-bearing diagonal that ran through the space from floor to ceiling. This expanding geometric plane suggested both recessional space and a sudden illuminated rupture in the skyscraper's skin, simultaneously articulating the steel beam itself as a powerful sculptural element. A precise scrim of bright light then began to rise along the bracing column, making it appear to levitate and detach itself from the titanic masses it bore. The effect made possible, even somehow inevitable, a sleight-of-hand congruence between the Light and Space perceptual conundrums of James Turrell and the heavyweight earthbound geometries of Tony Smith.

Chicago, like Tel Aviv, was also once called the White City—a moniker it earned with the construction of the lustrous site of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, six hundred acres of plaster of paris that imagined this midwestern metropolis as a City Beautiful rising from the ashes of the Chicago Fire of 1871. Cities never remain pristine, though, and Tichy revels in their accumulated residues and opacities. Last summer, in the collective pedagogical spirit of Moholy-Nagy, Tichy collaborated with his students to turn Mies's iconic Crown Hall at IIT into a giant steel and glass light box, projecting animations and films onto the glass from within. For a single night they succeeded in marrying the two adversaries in the sanctuary of Mies's former stronghold, invoking the shadows—the exiled aspirations, the hidden narratives, the literal obliterations—that modernist visions had been built on. It was a little joke, embedded in a gesture of creative reconciliation—one of many ironies that arise when you swap one penumbral city for another. □

JAMES TRAINOR IS A WRITER, EDITOR, AND TEACHER LIVING IN NEW YORK.

The Oregonian

Review: 'Disquieted' at the Portland Art Museum

By **D.K. Row**, *The Oregonian*
February 22, 2010, 7:00AM



"In the Midst of Dreams" by Jaume Plensa

The first work viewers encounter in "Disquieted," the gloriously ruminative new art exhibit at the Portland Art Museum, is a fiberglass, resin and marble sculpture of three white looming heads, their eyes closed and faces glowing from the light inside. Each head is etched with words that alternately connect and disconnect with the viewer's emotions - "ignorance," "wrath" and "desire," for example.

Nestled over beds of fabricated rocks, the heads by Spanish artist Jaume Plensa awe, confront and remind us of a world that's too much with us these days, a world so overwhelming that it pulls us into anxious reverie - hence the work's title, "In the Midst of Dreams."

Such, too, is the draw of this exhibit organized by the museum's chief curator, Bruce Guenther, and featuring 38 works by 28 contemporary artists, ranging from such revered figures as John Baldessari, Paul McCarthy and Barbara Kruger to a generation of artists who emerged a little after them, including Chiho Aoshima, Takashi Murakami and Andreas Gursky.

The show's roster of artists might suggest a survey of contemporary art. But "Disquieted" isn't. It's Guenther's meditation about a world of international conflict, technological revolution and social, economic and political upheaval. It's also a show that expresses the power of art to articulate the heap of world events. And, above all, it's an expression of the calming power of beauty and artistic feeling.

To some who might not read the show's fine print credits closely, the exhibit isn't a major event produced by another institution, thus visiting Portland temporarily. "Disquieted" is a homegrown, first-class effort highlighting artists from all over the world. Guenther tapped his extensive art world network to bring work by artists who are no longer part of the avant-garde but entering into the historical canon. Besides those already mentioned, there's also work by Bill Viola, Tracey Emin and Lari Pittman, among others.

Unfortunately, the budget-lean museum didn't have the money to produce a catalog - virtual or print - so subsequent generations could experience the show. That's disquieting.

Some might find the title "Disquieted" a push back. But the show's actually an invitation to the viewer. Two wars, the Great Recession and social and political agitation have forced even the least existential of us to wonder: Who are we? Where are we going? What does it all mean?

In other words, the exhibit is an opportunity to think about the state of the world. For some, that might be painful. But for this critic, it's a journey through white cubed rooms limned with the hopeful quiet that only art provides.

It's also a far-reaching journey of social and political issues spanning recent decades but whose presence has intensified since Sept. 11.

Charles Ray's eight-foot-tall sculpture of an imposing woman in a power suit is another example of this extraordinary artist's freakish virtuosity, but also, in this case, his in-your-face inquiry of gender power issues.

Artists Ellen Gallagher and Glenn Ligon separately, and in different ways, use text to explore racial politics and identity. And, in Gallagher's collages, the cut-and-paste process that defines art nowadays. Like our increasing multicultural world, art is a mixed-race population.

Meantime, another African American artist, Sanford Biggers, humorously, cuttngly appropriates the minstrel legacy that still rattles African American relations in this country with his lightbox of a big smiling mouth.

Photographer Gregory Crewdson's works aren't photos but constructed realities, or fantasies, where characters are snapped in cloistered rooms and engaged in almost Hitchcockian mystery. Born in 1962, Crewdson's articulating the weary ennui of a generation that's increasingly displaced from history and looking toward fabricated worlds for comfort and meaning.

Phenomenal Japanese artists Murakami and Aoshima scale up the notion of fantasy and virtuality to offer a view of the universe, not just the world. Murakami's delectable, dark abstract painting, "Warp," travels to a black hole, literally, while his disciple, Aoshima, meshes manga, anime and 19th-century Ukiyo-e print traditions in a tsunami of expression with her frieze-length color print. Theirs is an "Avatar"-like world before the movie came along.

Gursky's architectural photo of thousands of workers making chairs in a Vietnamese manufacturing plant is another cryptic indictment of corporate industrial practices by this German artist. Like all of Gursky's gorgeous photos, it's also artistic manipulation. The photo transforms industrial joylessness into a busy Manhattan dayscape.

Israeli Czech artist Jan Tichy's video projection "Facility" may be the exhibit's most spooky political statement. A shadow of a building moves slowly, painfully, next to the model of a small, white structure. The model is a replica of a building that houses detainees of the Israeli government, and the shadow mimics the course of the real building's shadow over one day. This is an artwork of enormous suggestion.

Like Tichy's video installation, Viola's slow-motion "The Quintet of the Astonished" moves at an ant's pace, revealing every detail and movement of five actors as they react emotionally - to something. It's a thing of riveting magnificence, this video that seems more like a Dutch Renaissance painting in its symphonic accumulation of details and moments.

Some might ask: What's the point? Not only of Viola's work but of this exhibit that directly and indirectly addresses so many heavy currents of the day. How do we put our arms around this story with so many narrative lines?

We can't, entirely, because the world truly is so much in these 38 works of art, which announce that we are not "Masters of the Universe," as Guenther put it.

But Guenther offers up some soothing existential tonics, namely art that also touches people emotionally, induces feeling and humanity. And, no matter what you think of each work, they're each beautifully made. Beauty matters in this - and Guenther's - world.

Those are sustaining, albeit modest, ideas to count on as events, technology and political ferment render us even more Lilliputian in size and power. We can count on ourselves as we move forward in an uncertain world. And we can count on the strength and beauty of human expression.

Don't believe the title. "Disquieted" is a comforting show.

-- **D.K. Row**

Jan Tichy

Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, USA

The John Hancock Center is perhaps Chicago's most iconic skyscraper, a black trapezoid rising 100 stories beside the city's shimmering lake. It is here, on the 24th floor, that Richard Gray Gallery (itself based in the building) found a vacant 30,000-square-foot office complex, likely forsaken by the current economic troubles, as the evocative location for Jan Tichy's sprawling installation. The lift door dings open to reveal an empty office suite. The lights are off. The ground is concrete, but filing cabinets remain. A low mechanical hum from the lift shaft produces a form of eerie, constant silence. Within this darkness, the nine video installations by Tichy emit their own light: phantasms amid the shells of former conference rooms and corner offices.

In *Installation No. 4 (Towers)* (2008), a gash of animated light creeps open on the floor. The slit extends itself slowly, a wavering mirage. Finally, it opens fully to cast a moonlight glow over two nondescript, white paper sculptures of towers. In the American Midwest, these structures would be placid water towers standing proud in small towns; in the Middle East they are oil rigs or military surveillance posts. Later, the animation depicts a lone wolf strutting past the towers: a dark omen.

Tichy's politics are emotional rather than ideological, moody but not impassioned. Born and raised in Prague, he left in the aftermath of the 1989 Velvet Revolution and emigrated to Jerusalem. There he lived through the recent Israel-Palestine conflict, and in 2007 emigrated again. Presently, he lives and teaches in Chicago. As Tichy often considers the conflicts and complexities of the urban experience, the Hancock Center's corporate ruins are a fitting setting for his work.

In *Bats* (2002-7), 35mm slides depict bats captured mid-flight at night. The high-pitch sound emitted from Tichy's flash equipment as it powered up attracted the bats, so he mimicked the noise with his mouth, luring them into his lens' purview. Seen from below, the flighty creatures reveal their odd little bodies in a glowing beam of light, their shadows cast long against Tel Aviv's architecture while the city's residents sleep. Similarly, Tichy lures viewers into his political commentaries, suspended in theatres of light and shadow, where ethereal objects, such as bats, garner meaty symbolic contours.

But Tichy pulls a quick change, diverting the sensory bath with an optical shift. He frames each scene from a distant vantage point, from outside the action. In one video we observe a children's playground from a nearby rooftop; another uses aerial maps; yet another shrinks the Chicago skyline through a camera obscura's pinhole. The tower installation, too, forces a bird's-eye-view. The simultaneous immersion and disengagement serves to dramatize how viewers participate in the political landscape. We crave a spellbinding, affective experience but often meet a cold narrative ellipse.

'Pictures' (2006) is a series of seven videos from a Tel Aviv slum where the artist worked. Each static camera position documents a tableau of the city's margins at night: a fire endangers a horse, a neighbour paces behind open curtains, searchlights crisscross the hazy sky. Like postcards, they are formally tight, even beautiful. From a distance, the decaying slum is momentarily wrapped in aesthetic delight. We're thrust eye-first and heart-long into contradiction.

Jason Foumberg



Jan Tichy
Bats
2002-7
Two-channel
slide projection

Art in America

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

JANUARY '10

CHICAGO

JAN TICHY

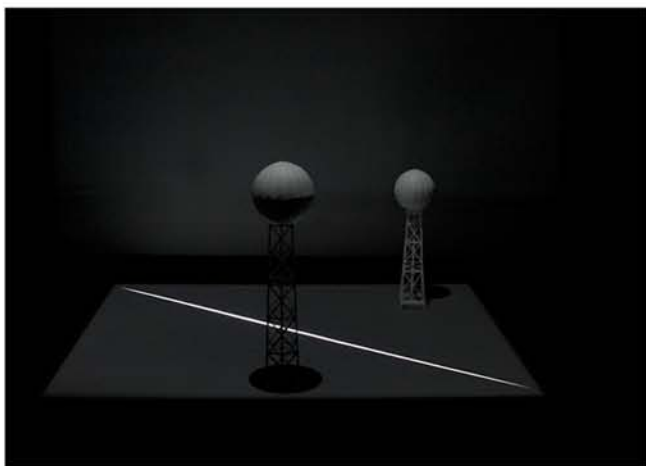
RICHARD GRAY

ON VIEW THROUGH JAN. 9

Jan Tichy's multimedia installations are meditations on landscape and light, ambiguous topologies at once familiar yet haunting and unknown. Although the Czech-Israeli artist, trained at Bezalel Academy in Jerusalem and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, has shown internationally, this was his first major survey. It was presented in the gallery's temporary project space, the 24th floor of the John Hancock Center. The nine works, each sited in a separate area or room, together created a constellational effect, a mapping both spatial and psychological of the darkened interior.

Several pieces combine changing digital video projections and abstract fabricated objects to exploit the plastic and metaphoric potentials of light. In *Installation No. 7* (2009), projected white lines move inch by inch into and out of a corner of the room and across the surfaces of cast porcelain domes, evoking small hills or shelters, clustered on the floor. The lines eventually come to rest on a variety of box forms, also cast in porcelain, hung in a loose pattern on the wall. Suddenly from this configuration issues the video image of a mysterious leaking liquid, followed by flashes of white light that imply danger.

Throughout this body of work, strong contrasts between black and white suggest various natural phenomena or human threat. In *Installation No. 5 (Threshold)*, 2008, three unidentified aerial maps slowly materialize, only to fade to black, within white fields projected onto three walls. Some 100 paper cylinders, each several inches in diameter, are attached perpendicular to the walls, lending the piece an architectural presence. Handcrafted paper models appear in other works—such as *Installation No. 4 (Towers)*, 2008, which features two 3-foot-tall water towers standing on the floor. Bathed in white light, the towers become totems in a flat, empty space devoid of any specific landscape referent. Then a projected black orb engulfs the scene.



Jan Tichy: *Installation No. 4 (Towers)*, 2008, digital video projection with paper objects, 9 minutes; at Richard Gray.

Tichy's syncretic practice succeeds in its fluid integration of diverse media, yet holds its strongest allegiance to photography and to the light experiments of Moholy-Nagy. In several works, photographic images are transferred to video, or video sequences are presented like photographs within framed wall-mounted LCD monitors. Cloaked in darkness, these pictures convey generalized impressions, rather than detailed portraits, of places like Chicago and Tel Aviv.

For the site-specific *Installation No. 8 (Hancock)*, 2009, the artist transformed a corner space into a high-tech imitation of a camera obscura. The inverted silhouettes of three residential towers situated just outside the gallery window were projected inside as digital animation within small floating raindrops on one of the building's diagonal support members. As elsewhere, transitory images became objects, and objects became moving images within measured plays of shadow and light.

—Susan Snodgrass

Jan Tichy

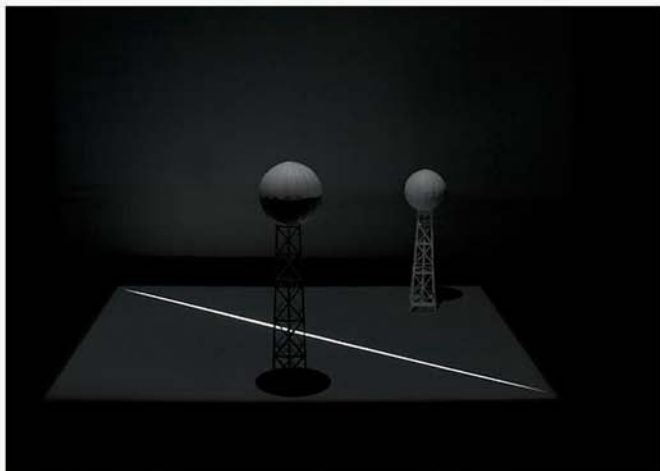
Richard Gray

Chicago

Jan Tichy's nine recent video installations got the sort of space they deserve here, benefiting from a vacancy on the 24th floor of the John Hancock Center (just one floor below Richard Gray's regular gallery space). The scale of the rooms and their murky emptiness provided an ideal environment for the artist's nearly sublime works that integrate light, sound, and sculpture into meditations on our built environments.

The best of the works incorporated vague and disjointed narrative elements to imbue the constructions with various overlapping meanings. In *Installation No. 4 (Towers)*, 2008, a video is projected over two paper models of water towers sitting on the floor. The piece includes geometric shapes in light and shadow that bring out the structure's stark beauty, while the silhouette of a coyote casing the perimeter of the piece evokes a sense of a place set apart.

In *Installation No. 7* (2009), digital video projection is superimposed onto porcelain mounds on the floor and rectangular forms on the walls. Tichy says the idea for the mounds came to him after studying the design of nuclear-waste-disposal sites. While the arrangement on the floor does suggest a



Jan Tichy, *Installation No. 4 (Towers)*, 2008, digital video projection with two 250-gram white paper objects, 39 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 102 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 78 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", 9 minutes. Richard Gray.

topographical map, the forms are not intended to correspond to any specific location. In this environment, the video's shifting and ephemeral light brought to mind the building up and erosion of landmasses across geologic time. At times, one or two objects on the wall appeared backlit; at another point, a line of light was traced just above the junction of wall and floor, then dropped into a thin space separating the two planes, so that it seemed for a moment as if light were seeping in from the other side of the wall. These fleeting experiences are as gratifying as any grand spectacle.

—Ruth Lopez

Illuminating a Recession

by Dan Gunn

JAN TICHY : INSTALLATIONS

Richard Gray Gallery

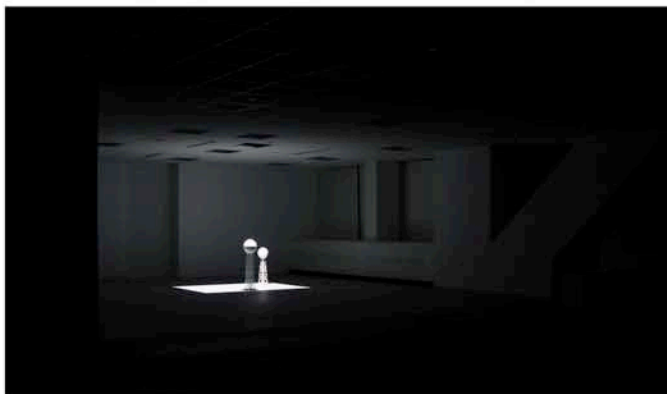
875 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611

October 9, 2009 - January 9, 2010



It's rare that an economic downturn has an 'upside' but without the downturn Jan Tichy's show "Installations" for Richard Gray Gallery would not have been possible. Mr. Tichy's video installations are literally embedded in the vacant offices and abandoned conference rooms of an entire floor in the Hancock Building.

Stepping off of an elevator into an empty and dimly lit level of corporate offices is already an evocative enough experience on its own and is heightened by what Mr. Tichy's videos do with the dark. Frequently the only light source available, Mr. Tichy's projected works are predominantly black and white videos that illuminate accompanying topographical paper forms on the walls or the floors. The sculpted paper and the videos interact: casting shadows, spotlighting, filling up or revealing separate parts.



Jan Tichy. *Installation No. 4 (Towers)*. Image courtesy of the artist and Richard Gray Gallery.

Installation No. 8 (Hancock) washes light onto and off of a crooked architectural nook created by the building itself. Shown above, the most evocative piece, *Installation No. 4 (Towers)* sits alone in a large room. Two paper radar towers were lit from above by a projection that slowly ebbed and flowed between a cold crisp brightness and a deep, twilight darkness. The brightness cast stark shadows from the towers and the curvature of the radar dome splits the projected pixels apart. The transition between the two states begins as a sliver of light grows progressively longer and wider to bathe the floor in a bright white rectangle.

Some other works sit awkwardly in the mix, like *Recess*, a long shot of a park playground during the day, seemingly unrelated to the light referenced in the rest of the work. Even *Bats*, a dueling pair of slide projectors that show photos of urban bats in mid-flight, relate back to Mr. Tichy's more formal installations. Their eyes glow in the night sky and the camera's flash shows their bone structure through their translucent wings. Caught like naked specters of the night mistakenly revealed, the bats symbolize the "otherness" of the dark that Mr. Tichy plays with elsewhere.

The natural impetus driving his work with light is clearly seen in a series called *Pictures*. Displayed on tiny LCD screens about the size of a family photo the vignettes feature banal nighttime arrangements of light. A streetlamp reflecting in a puddle of water, lit windows in a building across the street or a searchlight roaming the sky are like observational drawings done in video. Despite being more like studies for larger works they still they hold a quiet understated beauty in themselves.

Mr. Tichy has found in the play of material and light, representation and digital information, the intoxicating charm of a darkened cinema and the epiphany-like glow of the projector-- a remarkable feat for a medium that is as technological as video.

--Dan Gunn



Nov
11

Best gallery show in the last year

+ Culture & Nightlife

Jan Tichy, Richard Gray Gallery

It's a sign of the times when prime real estate is more accommodating to large-scale art installations than posh law offices. So, when the Richard Gray Gallery overtook the John Hancock Center's vacant twenty-fourth floor to host a sprawling installation by video artist Jan Tichy, the corporate post-apocalypse never seemed so tangible. Tichy, who teaches at the School of the Art Institute, was born and raised in Prague, and lived in Jerusalem during the recent Israeli-Palestinian conflict. His work is necessarily political yet surprisingly subtle, at turns ominous and hopeful.

875 North Michigan, 25th floor
(312)642-8877
richardgraygallery.com

Best of Chicago 2009

<http://best.newcity.com/2009/11/11/best-gallery-show-in-the-last-year/>

Welcome to Tel Aviv's first art biennial

After a shaky start and threats of artists boycotting the event, ArtTLV has downsized its international ambitions to host an inaugural showcase primarily exhibiting local art instead

Marisa Mazria Katz

guardian.co.uk, Thursday 17 September 2009 13.44 BST



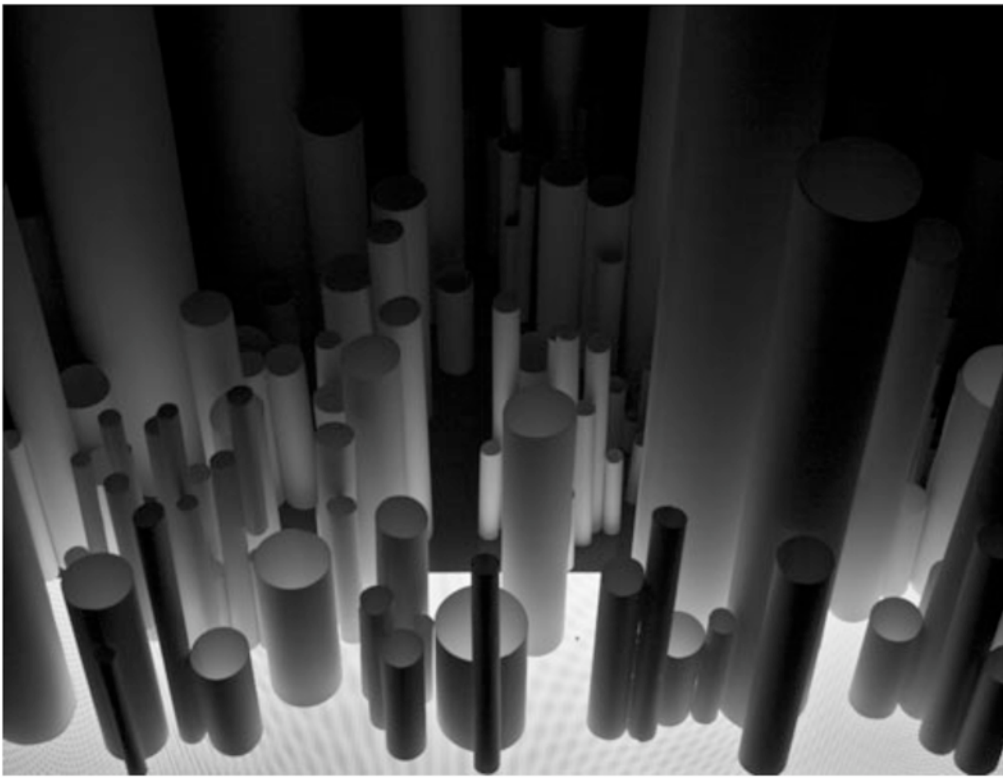
Political art ... Part of Israeli artist Shelly Federman's separation wall installation at the Tel Aviv Art Biennial. Photograph: Shelly Federman

A petite blonde with tight blue jeans and honey-coloured skin sits atop a Styrofoam slab in a bright courtyard. The slab is made to look like a portion of the West Bank's separation wall. "On the one hand its grotesque," said 34-year-old Israeli artist Shelly Federman as she lit a cigarette on a balmy September night, "but I wanted to make the wall visible, and in doing so make people feel uncomfortable." About half a dozen of these sponge wedges — roughly a quarter of the size of their actual counterpart — encircle a small screen that has a short video on loop. During the clip you hear Mungo Jerry's melodic song *Summertime* blast from speakers, accompanying images of sun-drenched Israelis using the grey blocks as surfboards and lounge chairs on a pristine Tel Aviv beach.

Federman's installation is the centerpiece for Tel Aviv's inaugural biennial, ArtTLV, a city-wide art event featuring roughly 300 local and international artists. The three-week-long happening, taking place inside galleries, public courtyards and workshops, is the brainchild of a group of art collectors, gallerists and philanthropists — coincidentally, all of them Israeli women. Their aim was to create a "Mediterranean cultural triangle" between Tel Aviv, Athens and Istanbul in an effort to promulgate Israeli art and culture, and also to facilitate a vibrant exchange between the three cities.

After a small test run last year, the organisers of ArtTLV hired two well-established, foreign curators, Zdenka Badovinac and Viktor Misiano, to oversee the biennial's official inauguration this month, timed to take place during Tel Aviv's centennial celebrations and within days of the opening of the Istanbul Biennial. Yet, as the story so often goes in [Israel](#), the grand triangular vision was torpedoed when Gaza was attacked in December 2008. After the onslaught began, Misiano and Badovinac announced they would only participate in the biennial if no government funding was accepted.

A little more subtle than Federman's squishy separation wall, is work from the artist Jan Tichy. Her white paper tubes of uneven height, vertically affixed on top of a TV screen, stand out as one of the exhibition's most poignant critiques of Tel Aviv and its evolution. Streams of white lines radiating from the black monitor burn light on the paper cylinders, which effectively operate, in the artists words, "as a kind of organism that lurks below the city's surface". Tichy says the piece challenges the 2003 listing of Tel Aviv's collection of Bauhaus buildings — known as White City — as a World Heritage site: "Tel Aviv may be called the White City, but it sits on big, black issues. And in many ways it is the unseen here that has an immense influence."



Jan Tichy's Installation No 6 (Tubes), 2009.

On the biennial's opening day, the darkness Tichy described was nowhere to be seen; instead it was all cava and gourmet espresso. The city's art elite popped in and out of the templar buildings to see the hundreds of videos, paintings, photographs and multimedia pieces. On the streets, however, few had heard of the event, giving it an insular, navel-gazing quality. Still, much of the work on show had a delicious sense of humour and subtly acknowledged the awkwardness that comes with exhibiting in a country mired in political turmoil. Of particular interest was Su-Mei Tse's video of uniformed men and women sweeping desert sand, and Aharon Ozery's 6ft steel and aluminum contraption that moved large white eggs around several platforms.

Further afield, a small exhibit that marked the literary debut of *Made Public: Palestinian Photographs in Military Archives in Israel*, was one of the few pieces to focus on the Palestinian minority living in Israel. The book, written by Israeli curator Rona Sela, features images of Palestinian soldiers studying maps and preparing for battle before the establishment of the state in 1948. Sela recovered the images from the Israeli Ministry of Defence archives when they were opened to the public in 2002.

The absence of local Arab artists at ArtTLV is not entirely surprising. Staging a showcase funded by the Israeli government against the backdrop of the city's centennial celebrations meant Palestinian artists living in Israel sidestepped participation. Despite the potential for controversy, Said Abu Shakra, director of the country's only Arab arts museum in Umm el-Fahm, curated an exhibit entitled *A Place of Memory*, which featured photographs of prominent Palestinians who reside in the northern Wadi Ara region. But international Arab representation was limited to artists Mounir Fatmi, who displayed a collection of 1,500 VHS cassettes arranged like a cluster of high-rises for his piece *Skyline*, and Kader Attia, whose work *Fragility* showed a series of sculpted plastic bags perched atop pillars.

When the opening gala was in full swing, Federman's separation wall slabs were subject to a barrage of accidental kicks and falls by passersby. These unintentional assaults were precisely what Federman sought when she conceived of the project. "I am trying to show the audience that there is no way to be passive, because when you are passive you are actually taking part in something that is terrible. By bringing the wall here, I want to bring the responsibility back."

A young woman in stiletto heels came over to greet Federman. As she stepped on to a wedge to take a seat, she punctured the surface with four golf ball-size holes. Federman smiled as she surveyed the damage. "Looks like rocks were thrown on it," she said, exhaling a plume of smoke. "Makes it look real."

Gaza Via Tel Aviv

ArtTLV, a success in 2008, was on its way to being an international event when the harsh reality, both political and financial, brought it back to being local

→ VARDIT GROSS

The opening night of ArtTLV 2008 took place on an early fall evening. Hundreds of people stormed down Rothschild Boulevard, walking between exhibition spaces, sipping alcohol and enjoying the perfect weather. The installations in venues along Nachalat Binyamin gave a different perspective to these rarely entered buildings; the videos playing outdoors at Yaacov Garden blended flawlessly with the architecture; the performance by the band Bney Hama mesmerized the crowd.

It was the kind of night that carries light optimism in it. The guests of Bank Leumi, the event's main sponsor, were excited and promised their support for the next ArtTLV. Tel Aviv Mayor Ron Huldai witnessed the powerful moment – and he, too, was happy to embrace ArtTLV 09 as part of Tel Aviv's centennial celebration. The light optimism carried into the winter: Three months later, in mid-December 2008, representative curators from the Istanbul biennial came to Israel to meet the appointed curators of ArtTLV, Zdenka Badovinac from Ljubljana, Viktor Misiano from Moscow and Edna Moshenson from

Tel Aviv. The curators started thinking about the possibility of cooperation, and discussed the meaning of having an international biennial in the Middle East. The idea of creating a triangle of connected events in the Mediterranean region, including the biennials in Istanbul and Athens, seemed closer than ever.

But dreams often fade in the non-forgiving Israeli sun. Just a few days after the international curators left, Israel launched its attack in the Gaza Strip. The domino effect was quick and painful: Following the images from Gaza, the Istanbul curators decided that they couldn't cooperate with ArtTLV, which is partially funded by the Tel Aviv Municipality. The international curators decided to rethink their concept and, in order to respond to the war, they offered an alternative plan: to publish statements made by important international artists and intellectuals about the war in Gaza in leading Israeli and Palestinian media outlets. The process of trying to execute this proposal was long and drawn-out. As time was running out on the curatorial side, bad news arrived on the financial side: With the world economic crisis

Images

Jan Tichy / Installation no. 6 (tubes)

2009, video installation, 10 min.
25" monitor, 200 paper objects, adhesive, sand bags
70x60x120 cm

Opposite page:

Meir Tati / Tikkun

2008, video installation





reaching new heights, the supporting bank announced less than six months before opening day that it would renege on its financial commitments. With no main sponsor and no other public institution to take it under its wing, and with an international media project that was slowly disappearing, ArtTLV had to think smaller and more local.

With the help of streets signs in Tel Aviv, people find their way to important tourist destinations in Gaza City

The smaller-than-planned ArtTLV, taking place this September, is connecting to other art events around Tel Aviv's centennial celebrations to create a weekend of art. All galleries in town will be open all night during the opening event, and many artists' studios will be open to the public over the following weekend.

ArtTLV 09's main exhibition, curated by Edna Moshenson and Maayan Sheleff, is located in a Templar settlement at the intersection of Neve Tzedek (Tel Aviv's first Jewish

neighborhood and currently a luxury residential area), Jaffa (which has a large Arab community) and Florentin (an industrial neighborhood home to many local artists). The exhibition is using this intersection as a starting point to discuss different aspects of urbanism. More than 30 local and international artists are taking part in this exhibition, among them Sigalit Landau, Yael Bartana, Francis Alÿs, Laurence Wiener, Allora and Calzadilla, Sue-Mei Tse, Michal Neeman, Jan Tichy, Yochai Avrahami, Nira Pereg, Michal Ullman and Miri Segal. Next to the main exhibition, the "Artist Curates Artist" section of ArtTLV 09, in which artists curate themselves, will be led by Said Abu Shakra – who, apart from being an artist, is the Ummi el-Fahem art gallery director.

An outdoor exhibition curated by Michael Kessus Gedalyovich and Maayan Sheleff plans to map the city both physically and mentally. The mapping project intends to build a route through the city using installations and performances, which ends in a big mud event on the beach. Among the mapping projects

is Mushon Zer-Aviv and Laila El-Haddad's "You're Not Here," which allows you to tour the streets of Gaza via the streets of Tel Aviv. In a sort of an urban tourism mash-up, people hold up a double-sided map to the light and, with the help of street signs in Tel Aviv, find their way to important tourist destinations in Gaza City. Audio tours are available through a hotline whose access numbers will be published in the streets. Other mapping projects include those by, among others, Adina Bar-On whose "Orientation" is a guided tour that examines private and public sentiments in regard to the city, and Ori Dromer and Lilach-Shira Gavish who will try to reveal lost cultural figures. Four leading Israeli video artists – Guy Ben-Ner, Doron Rabina, Boaz Arad and Ruti Sela – will work with curator Maayan Amir on their own mapping projects through an exploration of their unedited materials. The route built in the city by the different projects is supposed to continue from the beach and into the water with a boat that will host "Ex-Territory" – a conference taking place outside of any state's territorial water. →

An Interview with Jan Tichy, by Kathryn Hixson

By Kathryn Hixson



Jan Tichy, 1391, (2007), video installation

Jan Tichy is an Israeli artist of Czech origin living in Chicago. All of his work is photographic - taking such multiple forms as prints, videos, sculpture, digital animation and installations. His work embodies Douglas Ecklund's assertion in The Pictures Generation exhibition catalogue at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art (2009) that "the technical and material basis of all photography is the

control of light in relation to darkness." In some works, Tichy takes the intrinsic ability of the mechanical apparatus of the camera to capture a fleeting instant of time that the human eye can barely see. These images become objects frozen for further contemplation. In other works, he deconstructs our ability to "picture" a thing, place, or time in our mind's eye, actually constructing objects out of found images. He then uses the medium of light itself to activate these objects in a way that turns them back into images, etching themselves into our imagination.

Born in 1974 in Prague, Tichy moved to Israel in 1993. After four years of studying political science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, he attended Musrara School of Photography and New Media, Jerusalem. He continued his studies at the Advanced Studies in Art Program at Bezalel Academy of Art and Design. During a workshop at the Kiasma Museum of Modern Art in Helsinki, Finland, Tichy met Mary Jane Jacob, a curator and then chair of the Sculpture Department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), who encouraged him to pursue an MFA there.

Over the past two years Tichy has exhibited internationally, his work shown in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa, Prague, Berlin, Frankfurt, Barcelona, Washington DC, New York and Los Angeles. In 2008, his work was exhibited in the Israeli Pavilion at the Architecture Biennale in Venice. He recently completed a major Chicago project situated at Crown Hall, a building designed by Mies van der Rohe on the campus of Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT), as well as a collaborative project with SAIC professor Helen Maria Nugent for the upcoming exhibition "Learning Modern" at the Sullivan Galleries.

I recently talked to Tichy in his studio about the range of his works.

Kathryn Hixson (KH): At the Herzliya Biennale in 2007 you showed *Bats* (2007), an installation for two slide projectors with 80 images of bats. Why did you focus on bats?

Jan Tichy (JT): The work is not just about these mammals living around Tel Aviv, but also about the architecture of the city, and the sleeping people behind the shattered windows. It took me five years to gather and edit the final selection of photographs of the bats. I used a digital camera with a flash to capture images of the flying creatures. Even though these are friendly, fruit-eating bats, people have a strong reaction to them: either disgust or fascination. I find them cute and sometimes talk to them.

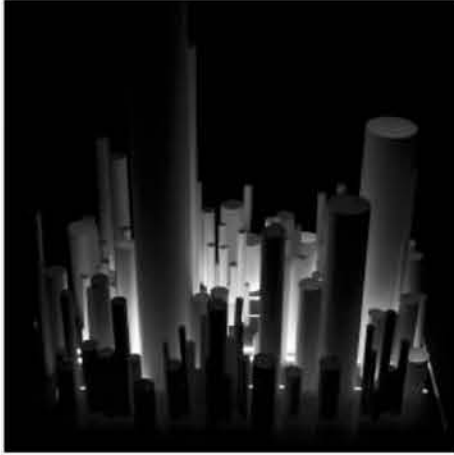


Jan Tichy, bats (2007), slide installation

KH: So you froze the bats' movement into still images. In other works you proceed in the opposite direction. You make objects, from paper or porcelain, often based on images found on the Internet and animate them with digitally projected light. Some of your installation objects are abstract, like domes, tubes or cylinders; some are generic like antennas towers or spatial grids. But you also worked with specific sites as well, making paper model kits according to images from the Web, such as

the Yasser Arafat International Airport in Gaza and the Dimona Nuclear Power Plant. In a solo show at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, you displayed a paper model kit of the secret Israeli prison, Facility 1391, a controversial site made public in 2003. Though hotly political, you presented the structures as if from a distance: small, cool, and opaque. Why did you choose these highly charged sites?

JT: It is about access and distribution of information. Those charged sites are inaccessible to the public for various political reasons. But there is enough visual information on the Internet for me to create a paper model of the structure and redistribute it as a cutout kit. The fragile paper model of the power structure placed on the floor redefines the building's relationship with the viewer.



Jan Tichy, installation no.6 (tubes), (2009), video installation

KH: You have begun to add sound to some of your installations. In Installation no.6 (tubes) (2009), you affixed paper tubes of various diameters onto a TV monitor positioned on its back, horizontally, so that the white tubes are lit from beneath by the screen, on which your abstracted light animation is playing. How did you make the sound for this piece?

JT: When I started to work with an analog CRT monitor, the good old tube, I noticed that even when the sound is turned off it makes this static noise. I used a pick-up microphone, like the one in an electric guitar, to amplify the noise and realized that there is a correlation between the

projected image and the amplified sound. I composed the score by changing the image. In effect, you hear what you see.

KH: In that work and other installations you animate still objects with time-based light projection. But you also made video works like the pictures (2007) or recess (2009), long video shots of the urban environment.

JT: These shots were coincidentally collected. The pictures are from south Tel Aviv, found on my way home from the studio. Others are from different trips in Europe and America. Although I am using different media approaches, in the end the stillness, the light and the movement are all present, creating similar effects as in my sculptural installations.



Jan Tichy, the pictures (2007), multi channel video installation.

KH: You have already taught in some very different settings, mostly in Israel. Now you are starting to teach in Chicago. To which pedagogical models do you look?

JT: After teaching for number of years in Israel, it was important for me to experience American art education models, first of all as a student, and SAIC offered me an essential experience. I am now leading a group of international MFA students as a part of "The Bauhaus Labs" program organized by SAIC and IIT, to light up the Crown Hall building with video projections. It is a collaborative effort in

the spirit of Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, I'm bringing in the know-how, but the creative process will be one of cooperative teamwork.

About the author:

Kathryn Hixson is an art critic, professor at the Department of Art History, Theory, and Criticism at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She is former editor of *New Art Examiner*, and her writing has been published in *Art US*, *Art on Paper*, *Flash Art*, *Arts*, and many other arts publications internationally, and she has written catalogue essays for the Renaissance Society, MCA Chicago, Milwaukee Art Museum, and numerous galleries. She is currently working on her PhD in Art History at the University of Texas at Austin, and recently received an Art Writers Grant from Creative Capital / Andy Warhol Foundation.

FACILITY 1391

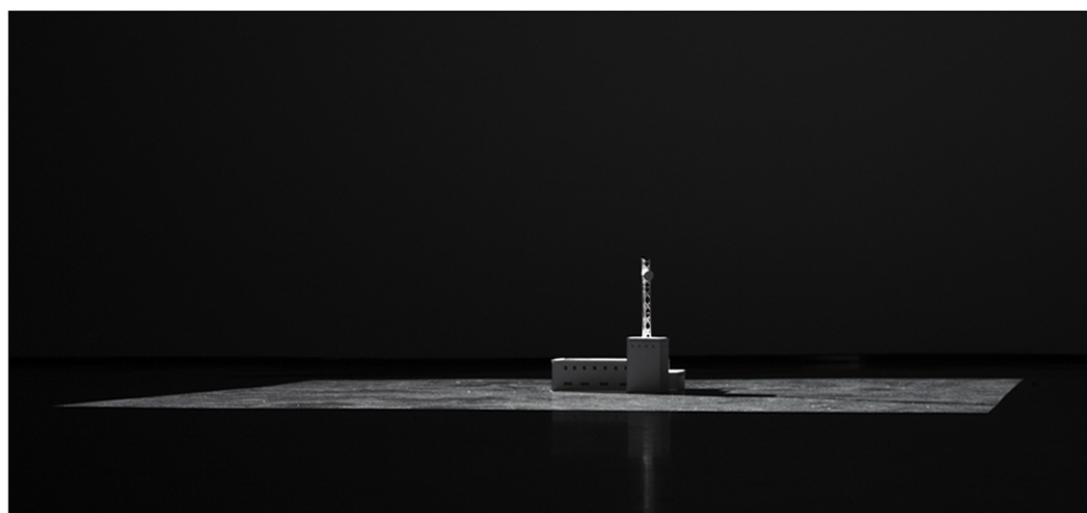


05

DESIGN
JAN TICHY

1391 (2007), MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART CHICAGO 2008
INSTALLAZIONE VIDEO, 10 MINUTI
MODELLO DI CARTA (20 X 28 X 33 CM), PER GENTILE CONCESSIONE DELL'ARTISTA
PROIEZIONE VIDEO VERTICALE (152 X 203 CM)
STAMPA A GETTO D'INCHIOSTRO (305 X 28 CM) E TESTO (43 X 28 CM)

1391 (2007), MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART CHICAGO 2008
VIDEO INSTALLATION, 10 MINUTES
PAPER MODEL (20 X 28 X 33 CM), COURTESY OF THE ARTIST
VERTICAL VIDEO PROJECTION (152 X 203 CM),
INKJET PRINT (305 X 28 CM) AND TEXT (43 X 28 CM)



Questa struttura si trova al centro di Israele, vicino al confine con la Palestina. Ricorda molte delle stazioni di polizia fortificate, in stile Tegart, costruite durante il mandato britannico. Molti di quegli edifici oggi fungono da basi militari, la loro ubicazione è rivelata da segnali stradali che riportano solo un numero. Facility 1391 non è segnalata sulle carte geografiche ed è stata cancellata dalle foto aeree. L'edificio, "la Guantanamo di Israele", è una sorta di buco nero nel quale i detenuti, molti dei quali libanesi catturati durante i 18 anni della lunga occupazione israeliana del Libano meridionale, sono svaniti, spogliati dei diritti fondamentali stabiliti dalla Convenzione di Ginevra.

The facility is located in central Israel, close to the border between Israel and Palestine. It resembles many of the heavily fortified, Tegart-style police stations built during the British Mandate. Many of these serve as military bases today, their location revealed through roadside signs showing only a number. Facility 1391 is not marked on maps and has been erased from aerial photographs. The facility, "Israel's Guantanamo", is a sort of black hole into which inmates, many of them Lebanese captured during Israel's 18-year occupation of South Lebanon, disappear, to be stripped of their basic rights under the Geneva Conventions.