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HYDE PARK ART CENTER
75 YEARS
OF MAKING CHICAGO'S
ART HAPPEN



Assaf Evron,
Untitled (series R)
2010
archival inkjet print
70/70cm
1 out of 5 in series

HYDE PARK ART CENTER PRESENTS

“THE CHICAGO EFFECT: REDEFINING THE MIDDLE” AUGUST 24 – NOVEMBER 23

Exhibition and Collaborative Experimental Program Examines the Concept of the Middle

Chicago—In August, Hyde Park Art Center will unveil a group exhibition that takes a seemingly pedestrian topic and turns it on its head. “**The Chicago Effect: Redefining the Middle**” is an exhibition and public program that engages artists and practitioners in considering conditions of the middle—both conceptual and concrete. Artwork on view in “The Chicago Effect” will explore permeable boundaries, liminal spaces, and in-betweens, identifying and asserting the necessity of the middle as a fertile improvisational space that becomes a creative engine, and raising questions about the value of a middle-man, a middle class, a moderate political position, and even the middle ground between formal and material states. Using the Art Center as a model for how an arts institution can occupy the space of the middle to foster intercommunity connectivity and spur creative production, public programming and a printed catalogue will accompany the exhibition with guest essays, offering an analyses of how mid-sized organizations can serve and engage audiences.

Co-curated by Director of Exhibitions & Residency Programs **Allison Peters Quinn**, Residency & Special Projects Manager **Megha Ralapati**, and New York-based guest curator **Christopher K. Ho**, the exhibition encourages movement away from the poles. The curators frame the position of the middle as an essential condition of the creative process, selecting artwork that exemplifies this idea. “The Chicago Effect” includes work by **Marissa Lee Benedict, Robert Burnier, Devon Dikeou, Essex Olivares, Assaf Evron, Jamie Hayes, Patrick Meagher, Michael Smith, Jan Tichy, and Lan Tuazon.**

“We’ve found our position in ‘the middle’ to be fertile ground for creativity and connectivity—both for the Art Center as an institution and for the artists and communities we work with,” said Executive Director **Kate Lorenz**. “We’re excited to partner with artists and organizations in ‘The Chicago Effect’ to present alternate viewpoints of the middle and its benefits to the creative process. The middle can be a place of uncertainty, but that’s exactly what makes it so exciting. Those moments can be used to turn the middle into an incubator for radical thought.”

Celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2014, Hyde Park Art Center is somewhere in the middle of its history. An organization that has developed a lasting legacy over time, its institutional identity has always been oriented to the new. The Art Center embraces occupying this middle ground: the space of tension between past and future, the grey area of openness to what could be, the place of connection between opposing elements. By being comfortable with the middle—being a mid-sized institution, supporting artists at the emerging and blockbuster levels and everywhere in between, straddling the line between contemporary art gallery and community center—the Art Center has grown into a space of creative production that connects diverse audiences unlike any other in Chicago.

Experimental Interventions

Using the Art Center model as a laboratory, “The Chicago Effect” includes a year-long think tank in which teams of academics and practitioners in diverse fields question assumptions about how an art center can and should function. These projects inspired a complementary program of experimental interventions, which will be presented throughout the run of the exhibition. Representatives from **Cranbrook Academy of Art**, **DePaul University**, **IDEO**, the **Illinois Institute of Technology**, **Rhode Island School of Design (RISD)**, the **School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC)** and the **University of Chicago’s Science of Philanthropy Initiative** will physically and conceptually adapt the Art Center’s administration, architecture, design, and programming leading up to and during the exhibition. A catalogue documenting these trials will serve as a blueprint for experimental ways the art center of the future might effectively engage with and serve its community.

Exhibited in conjunction with “The Chicago Effect,” the exhibit “**Isolated Fictions: A Reenactment**” was proposed by “The Chicago Effect” co-curator, Christopher K. Ho’s art students at Rhode Island School of Design as a way to embed projects by smaller artist-run galleries into their programming. The hypothesis is that this interaction will build a stronger network for emerging artists through continued support and collaboration among mid-sized institutions and Chicago’s varied artist-run venues.

The art students researched artist-run spaces in Chicago and chose to invite **The Green Lantern**, a Chicago non-profit publishing house and former apartment gallery to re-present the space’s final exhibition in 2010. According to the students, The Green Lantern stood out because it demonstrated a creative resiliency, showing artwork and engaging in literary publishing, underscoring the importance of the institution as an alternative source of creative knowledge for its community. Green Lantern’s exhibition history and publications are relevant to both the project at hand and to a much larger scope of artistic exchange.

“Isolated Fictions: A Reenactment” features artwork by Amanda Browder, Nick Butcher, Maria Dumlao, Jason Dunda, Rebecca Mir Grady, Nadine Nakanishi, Carmen Price, Steve Ruiz and Hui-min Tsen.

Programming

September 13

75th Anniversary Block Party BBQ Bash

The public is invited to celebrate the “The Chicago Effect” and all the exhibitions on view at the Art Center’s 75th Anniversary Block Party BBQ Bash on Saturday, September 13 from 12 – 9pm. A reception will be held from 5-8pm.

September 15, 6 pm

Gallery Tour

Experience the exhibition with a tour from the curators Allison Peters Quinn and Megha Ralapati.

October 14, 6pm

Institution as Agent

Art practice today regularly appropriates administrative and managerial forms. Within this expanded field of organizational art production, what role can the community art center play in presenting and supporting it? Led by architect and professor at Illinois Institute of Technology Andrew Schachman, this discussion explores how such trends in art impact the operations of the institution.

October 28, 6pm

Institution as Signifier: Education as Art Practice

When artists appropriate education as art form, what is the impact on the spaces and platforms for Arts Education, more broadly? Are there possibilities for artists and institutions to participate in public education? Along with practitioners in the field, Andrew Schachman leads a conversation about the dynamics of Education as Art Practice.

November 10, 6pm

Creative Response to The Chicago Effect

Students from the Curatorial Practices course at SAIC, led by Abigail Satinsky, will be researching curating in the expanded field of alternative and artist-run spaces. Based on ongoing research, they will program a night of creative response, utilizing archives, social practice, performance, and interventions.

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Hyde Park Art Center is a unique resource that advances contemporary visual art in Chicago by connecting artists and communities in unexpected ways. As an open forum for exploring the artistic process, the Art Center fosters creativity through making, learning about, seeing, and discussing art—all under one roof. The Art Center is funded in part by: Alphawood Foundation; Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts; a City Arts III grant from the City of Chicago’s Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events; Field Foundation of Illinois; Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts; Harper Court Arts Council; Harpo Foundation; Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; Illinois Humanities Council; Irving Harris Foundation; Joyce Foundation; Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince; National Endowment for the Arts; National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Illinois General Assembly; Polk Bros. Foundation; David C and Sarajejan Ruttenberg Arts Foundation; Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust; and the generosity of its members and people like you.