January 2008

Call for Proposals:
Art in the Public Sphere: Singular Works, Plural Possibilities

Exhibition Description:

In conjunction with a daylong symposium to examine the complexities and challenges of producing work in and about the public domain, the University Gallery at the University of Massachusetts Amherst will present a juried exhibition of proposed public art projects for self-appointed places on a local, national, and global level. The exhibition will highlight the contemporary trends and new ideas in the field of public art that will be explored at the symposium.

Work submitted for possible inclusion in this exhibition may be realized or un-realized public art commissions, speculative investigations, actions and/or interventions. The work selected for exhibition will demonstrate how the operative criteria for actualizing work in the public domain can be culturally resonant, ecologically sound, imaginatively stimulating, perceptually engaging and politically effective.

The exhibition, Art in the Public Sphere: Singular Works, Plural Possibilities, will be on view from April 25 to May 24, 2008 at the University Gallery. The jury-selected works will address the aspects of temporality, community, place, and practice, which are explained in the proposal description below. All selected works and proposals will be displayed with digital projectors or on flat screen monitors. The opening reception will be held on the day of the symposium, April 25, from 5-7 PM.
Open Call for Proposals:

A central component of the symposium will be an exhibition of contemporary public art works, projects, and proposals. The University Gallery invites local and international artists, artists’ collectives, architects and designers from all disciplines to submit entries that address regional, national, and global issues based on the following themes:

- **TEMPORALITY**—Within certain institutional and bureaucratic frameworks, permanent structures typically signify a participatory process and sustained commitment to a group, community, region, etc. Yet, more recently artists have embraced ephemerality and time-sensitivity as organizing principles toward similar ends. What are the respective opportunities and limitations of producing ephemeral versus permanent works?

- **COMMUNITY**—If there exists no unified or discrete community, the notion of “community” necessarily remains a powerful motivating force in many works in the public domain. What are the strategies and approaches that critically address the presumptions and expectations of community-based / public art projects, particularly those that deal with inequities?

- **PLACE**—The concept of place is always bound up with relations of power and invested with competing memories. However, artists and public projects are often encouraged to stabilize, restore, or shore up a sense of place. How do artists critically invoke cultural memory and how have the attributes of ‘place’ been reconfigured in art today?

- **PRACTICE**—How have interactive, collective, and/or collaborative processes within and across disciplines influenced art in the public realm? In what ways have these new methods of practice transformed previously overlooked spaces into visible places, responded to web-based and digital culture, promote social consciousness and interaction and/or engage ecological consequences?
Submission Requirements:

Submission of work for review should be sent via email to: publart@umass.edu.

Please submit your work in one of the following formats:

- Option #1: a PDF file with up to 10 images (maximum 4 MB) as an attachment.
- Option #2: for video files and web-based work only: a url link to a web site where the material can be viewed and downloaded.

No other formats will be accepted.

In addition, please be sure to include your contact information and a written summary (maximum of 500 words) of your project within your email message.

Entries should be sent no later than March 17th, 2008 5:00pm.

Selected exhibitors will be notified via email of their acceptance on March 31, 2008. At that time we will ask each exhibitor for appropriately sized files of your proposal that will be used as your exhibition entry.

The due date for final entry materials is April 6, 2008.

Please visit the University Gallery’s web site for full information regarding the symposium and the exhibition at www.umass.edu/fac/universitygallery

Selection Process:

A selection committee, made up of the symposium’s invited speakers and outside jurors specializing in the field, amongst them Vito Acconci, Rick Lowe, Ann Pasternak, and George Trakas, will review proposal submissions in a one step process to select the projects to be exhibited. Selected exhibitors will be listed on the Symposium/Exhibition website.

For questions please contact: efierst@art.umass.edu