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EXHIBITION: World Factory

LOCATION: Walter and McBean Galleries

San Francisco Art Institute

800 Chestnut Street

San Francisco, CA 94133

OPENING RECEPTION: January 25, 2007, 5:30–7:30pm

EXHIBITION DATES: January 26–April 21, 2007

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IMAGES: High-resolution images available

Director of Exhibitions and Public Programs and Chair of the Exhibitions and Museum Studies Program, **Hou Hanru** is curator of the exhibition *World Factory*, which is now showing at SFAI's Walter and McBean Galleries. Effectively a kind of testing ground for a section of the 2007 Istanbul Biennial (*Not Only Possible but Also Necessary: Optimism in the Age of Global War*, for which Hou was recently named artistic director), *World Factory* is the second exhibition in Hou's newly organized program at SFAI.

The program consists of five discrete but intersecting directions for investigating current constructions of contemporary global culture: *Global Figures*, *New Models of Production*, *Acting Out in the City*, *Pacific Perspective*, and *New Voices*. Internationally known as a dynamic and innovative curator and critic of contemporary art, Hou most recently served as the artistic director of the 2nd Guangzhou Triennial and, in addition to the 2007 Istanbul Biennial appointment, was also recently named curator of the Chinese Pavilion at the 2007 Venice Biennale.

World Factory—an exhibition-in-progress that will run in three phases from January 26 to April 21, 2007—has been conceived and will be configured so as to transcend the traditional histories and narratives of exhibition practice. With its nonconventional and evolving format—overlapping time segments for gallery installations; workshops; film screenings; seminars; off-site and site-specific projects; and web-based works—World Factory can be said to quote and reappropriate, in both arrangement and presentation, a number of the very conditions (caused by rampant globalization) from which it derives its name. In the “flat world” (Thomas Friedman) created by the ever-escalating outsourcing of goods and services from the so-called First to the so-called Third World, entire regions and nations have become factories for the other “half” of the globe—the “half” that promulgates and profits from the universalization of the “free”-market economy.

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Originally envisaged as a way to evade a long but tenuous history of fair labor practices in the West, these strategically located “world factories” are run along 19th-century, Dickensian lines. They demand intensely hard work and long hours for very little pay. They destroy or radically alter the inchoate infrastructures of the developing regions they overrun. They leave a deep footprint, lasting and noxious: pollution, displacement, depleted natural resources, and an aggravated local imbalance between rich and poor. Their impact doesn’t end there, however. In much the same way, it ramifies laterally as well—that is, within the so-called First World nations.

What Hou and the 30 international artists he has gathered together for *World Factory* will be making plain, however, is that as with their 19th-century counterparts, the oppressed people working in and around the world’s factories today have not been taking their exploitation lying down. On the contrary, many of them have been mobilizing new forms of social consciousness and resistance, new projects and strategies for staking their own claims on the more and more complex global map. Not only are they negotiating for a say in the socio-political, economic, and technological debates of the coming global community, but they have already begun to construct that community through an energetic and explosive cultural and artistic expansion the lasting effects of which have only just begun to receive commensurate exhibition and reflection.

Indeed, part of the rationale for housing the various phases of *World Factory* on the historically engaged SFAI campus is to emphasize the relevance of that kind of reflection which is open-ended, dialogical, and interactive, the kind that invites not only colleague-to-colleague exchanges, but intergenerational, as it were “cross-platform,” conversation and conviction. In short, *World Factory* is not so much an exhibition as a complex and dynamic deconstruction of the institutional matrix through which it has been instigated and by which it is sustained.

The opening reception for the first phase, Active Witness, is on Thursday, January 25 from 5:30 till 7:30pm. The exhibition itself runs from Friday, January 26 to Tuesday, February 27. The artists are as follows: Michael Blum (France/Austria/USA); Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries (Young-Hae Chang and Marc Voge) (Korea); Vicky Funari and Sergio De La Torre (USA); Jean-Baptiste Ganne (France); Jens Haaning (Denmark); Ömer Ali Kazma (Turkey); Map Office (Laurent Gutierrez and Valérie Portefaix) (France/Hong Kong); Mario Rizzi (Italy); Raqs Media Collective (India); Allan Sekula (USA); Zhou Hao and Ji Jianghong (China).

The opening reception for the second phase, Resistance and Dreams, is on Wednesday, February 28 from 5:30 till 7:30pm. The exhibition itself runs from Thursday, March 1 to Tuesday, March 27. The artists are as follows: Cao Fei (China); Chen Chieh-jen (Taiwan); Flying City (Yong-Seok Jeon and Jang-Jong Kwan) (Korea); Jean-Baptiste Ganne (France); Andreja Kuluncic (Croatia); Lu Chunsheng (China); Tadej Pogačar (Slovenia); Julien Prévieux (France).

The opening reception for the third phase, Making Our Places, is on Wednesday, March 28 from 5:30 till 7:30pm. The exhibition itself runs from Thursday, March 29 to Saturday, April 21. The artists are as follows: Cao Fei and Ou Ning (China); Teddy Cruz (Guatemala/USA); Sanja Iveković (Croatia);

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Sora Kim (Korea); Julio Cesar Morales (Mexico/USA); Pascale Marthine Tayou (Cameroon/Belgium); Lordy Rodriguez (Philippines/USA); Zhu Jia (China).

Related to their contributions to *World Factory* and as part of our Visiting Artists and Scholars Lecture Series, Laurent Gutierrez and Valérie Portefaix, who make up Map Office, will lecture on Wednesday, 24 January, and Teddy Cruz will lecture on Monday, 16 April. Together with Didier Faustino, Teddy Cruz will also be leading a workshop project as part of the gallery program *Reaching Out to the City*; both Cruz and Faustino will be in residence from March to April 2007. Additionally, many of the artists showing work in the *World Factory* exhibition will be making regular studio visits throughout their stays at SFAI.

SFAI's Public Programs are supported in part by the Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund. *World Factory* is supported by Lombard-Fried Projects, New York and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy, Consulate General, San Francisco; it is presented in conjunction with the 10th International Istanbul Biennial, *Not Only Possible but Also Necessary: Optimism in the Age of Global War*.

About San Francisco Art Institute

Founded in 1871, San Francisco Art Institute is one of the US's oldest and most prestigious schools of higher education in contemporary art. SFAI's academic and public programs further the relationship between the practices and theories of contemporary art. SFAI's School of Studio Practice is centered on the development of the artist's vision through studio-based experiments and the understanding that the artist is an essential part of society. The School of Interdisciplinary Studies is based on the premise that critical thinking and writing—informed by an in-depth understanding of theory and practice—are essential for engaging global society.

SFAI's Summer Institute offers a low-residency MFA degree program, the City Studio Pre-College and Teacher Professional Development programs, as well as studio and interdisciplinary courses for credit and noncredit. Courses range from one-to-eight weeks, and include a full range of studio disciplines, art writing, English as a second language, art history, study/travel, and more.

For more information about these and other programs offered at SFAI, as well as information about how to apply, please see www.sfai.edu or call 800 345 SFAI.