

For Immediate Release

SPACES Opens Its Own Cleveland Convention and Visitors Bureau



The Think Tank That Has Yet to Be Named, *untitled*, 2012, digital image, courtesy of the artist.

Exhibition: May 11 - July 13, 2012

Opening Reception: Friday, May 11, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Cleveland, OH, April 19, 2012—SPACES will become the unofficial visitors center for Cleveland—a city with its own unique charms—in its exhibition *The Cleveland Convention and Visitors Bureau* (May 11 – July 13, 2012). This project seeks to engage the idea of tourism through the lens of a city that is not a traditional tourist destination. Participating artists engage Cleveland as a subject and medium in both critical and laudatory way—show that the city is singular and generic, foreign and familiar, and how that plays into notions of nostalgia, pilgrimage, place, history, community, displacement, commerce, and attraction.

The front gallery of SPACES will be converted into an ad hoc visitors center complete with postcards, brochures, a tea room and a friendly staff to guide visitors through the exhibition and the city. Deeper into the space, visitors will encounter artist projects from Cleveland SGS (SPACES artists-in-residence from Cleveland, OH), the Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative (Cleveland OH), Alison Pebworth (SPACES artist-in-residence from San Francisco, CA), Temporary Travel Office (Chicago, IL), and *The Think Tank That Has Yet to Be Named* (Philadelphia, PA and Iowa City, Iowa).

The artist collective Cleveland will unleash a “synchronized awareness campaign” on the city, a set of carefully crafted advertisements meant to draw travelers to their installation at SPACES—the

long-anticipated tourist destination, *Essence Unique Shrine and Showroom*. The shrine pulls from the visual language of storefront spiritualists, dream books, tourist brochures, and the symbolic possibilities of parlor games to delve into traditions of spiritual tourism in Cleveland. Visitors are invited to immerse themselves in the sensory chaos of a spiritual destination devoted to the vagaries of chance, faith, and gambling all at once. The wisdom of Reverend True, Cleveland's forgotten Master Specialist—to whom SGS dedicates this shrine—knows the score when it comes to calculating odds from the mystical implications of games and luck.

The Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative (CUDC) will highlight many of the places in Cleveland that *could* become major tourist destinations, but aren't destinations just yet. The CUDC's contribution is a model depicting tourist destinations of the future—some very plausible and others that are more hypothetical. In conjunction, they will be organizing a tour to two of these future tourist spots.

Alison Pebworth's *Beautiful Possibility Project* explores American culture through its lost and obscured histories. The prototypes of early American Traveling shows inform a social practice that takes her on the road with a ten-month traveling exhibition. As she tours across the country, venues for the exhibition serve as headquarters for assimilating local research and engaging the public in interactive projects that, in turn, inform her studio practice. Alison will bring her show to SPACES in late May, but she will also be mailing SPACES postcards from her cross-country trip to be included in the exhibition.

Temporary Travel Office's project "Right to the Riparian City" addresses Doan Brook, a waterway that flows from Shaker Heights, through Cleveland and into Lake Erie. proposes that the boundaries of the Doan Brook Watershed be recognized as both a political and ecological territory. The Travel Office will produce visual markers of the Watershed's boundaries and documents that position visitors and residents in relation to the Watershed. Tours and discussions that outline the natural and social reality of this territory will also be organized with community organizations and members.

The Think Tank that has yet to be named adapts the ecological model of forest succession in order to explore the ways in which cities change over time through a cyclical process of growth, stagnation, disaster, abandonment and revitalization. Visitors to the project are invited to play with a physical manifestation of the urban succession model and consider their own city and neighborhoods in light of this analytical framework.

ARTIST BIOS

Cleveland SGS is a homegrown group of street archivists and artists who, since 2006, have investigated the hidden meaning of Cleveland's commercial narrative, one block at a time. From pawnshops to carryout, hair care to daycare, and back alleys to bar stools, SGS has painstakingly chronicled the homemade imagery that makes up so much of Cleveland's landscape. Drawing heavily on the stories, images and visual vernacular they unearth in their travels across the city, SGS produces video, paintings, installations and signage deeply entwined with the city's pulse. Visit www.clevelandsgs.org for more info.

The Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative (CUDC) is the combined home of the urban design graduate program at Kent State University and the public service activities of the College of Architecture and Environmental Design. The CUDC's professional staff of designers are committed to improving the quality of urban spaces through technical design assistance, research and advocacy. Supported by the Ohio Board of Regents' Urban University Program, the university and private philanthropy, the CUDC offers architectural and urban design expertise in the service of urban communities, design professionals, and non-profit and academic partners in Cleveland and Northeast Ohio. Visit www.cudc.kent.edu/ for more information.

The Think Tank That Has Yet to Be Named initiates conversations, research, performative actions, and educational projects that interrogate contemporary issues in the places where we encounter them. The Think Tank is comprised of several Departments, each led by a single Director. Directors are both autonomous agents and cooperative collaborators. The Think Tank has no members, only directors; it is malleable, open, networked, and participatory. The declaration of a directorship in a Department amounts to a statement of that individual's bias and agenda. Nothing is more offensive to the Think Tank than the pretense of neutrality. Visit <http://thinktank.boxwith.com/> for more information.

Alison Pebworth has been making "street side" projects locally and nationally since 2004 under the rubric of the Roadside Show & Tell, a series of interactive nomadic projects created in the spirit of the 19th century American traveling show. In 2006, she traveled cross-country for eight months developing Looking for Lost America, a research project of the Roadside Show & Tell. This trip laid the foundation for Beautiful Possibility, her current traveling exhibition and research project that self-tours across the northern United States and southern Canada in 2010 and 2012. The Center for Cultural Innovation has supported the Beautiful Possibility project through Planning, Implementation, and Artistic Innovation Grants (2007-2010). Southern Exposure in San Francisco launched the Beautiful Possibility Project with an exhibition, catalog and essay by Rebecca Solnit. Alison's work is included in Creative Time's, Living as Form Archive, a survey of the last twenty years of socially engaged art (2011).

Temporary Travel Office produces a variety of services relating to tourism and technology aimed at exploring the non-rational connections existing between public and private spaces. Our mission is to investigate the potential of tourism as a critical activity, i.e. one able to generate imaginative and analytical perspectives on our surroundings. Towards these ends, The Travel Office produces guided, and self-guided tours as well as research documents and proposals for rethinking monuments and parks. Visit www.temporarytraveloffice.net for more information.

OTHER VISITORS BUREAU EVENTS

This spring, SPACES takes its unofficial *Cleveland Convention and Visitors Bureau* to the streets. On bike, on foot and via caravan, you're invited to follow the lead of local luminaries on tours of Cleveland that show the city through their eyes.

Visit www.SPACESgallery.org for updates on tour dates, times and details. Come see Cleveland like you've never seen it before!

Walking Tour of Historical, Useful and Tasty Weeds with Leslie Williams, Herbalist and Herbal Educator

Saturday, May 19, 11:00 – 12:30 pm

Rain Date: Visit www.SPACESgallery.org

Drizzle Date, same day, but bring an umbrella.

Meet: At SPACES

Cost: FREE, but donations are accepted.

Just blocks away from SPACES, discover urban weeds with an array of uses. Leslie Williams will take us through the secret histories, and medicinal and food uses of these plants. Are the weeds you walk past every day good in salads? Were they brought from Eastern Europe because they are traditionally used as seasoning in stew? Or were they brought from Japan because of their lovely flowers? Come find out! All that, plus guidance on how to harvest, store and cook certain wild plants.

Williams has a master's degree in community education and belongs to the American Herbalist Guild. She does clinical herbal and nutritional work, and will be doing historical artisan work in the Cuyahoga National Valley Park this summer on herbal medicine, ethnobotany and native herbs for dying fabric.

Industry, Art, and Architecture: An East Cleveland Walking Tour with Christopher Busta-Peck Tour, Founding Editor of Cleveland Area History

Saturday, May 26, 2:00 - 4:00 pm

Raindate: Saturday, June 9, 2:00 - 4:00 pm

Meet: New Life Cathedral, at 16200 Euclid Avenue, East Cleveland, Ohio

Cost: FREE

Join us on a tour to some spectacular (and forgotten) places. Along Euclid Avenue, we'll see the remnants of Cleveland's early industry, in the massive stone tannery (c. 1850) on Nine Mile Creek – the nucleus of this neighborhood's settlement. A very different use of the area's sandstone will be seen in the best collection of early grave markers in the region. We'll head onward to a few houses that once lined Euclid Avenue, including one that may be among the oldest in the county. Before looping back, we'll stop at a grand house, built c. 1850, facing Euclid Avenue and hidden in plain view.

Christopher Busta-Peck is the founding editor of Cleveland Area History, (www.clevelandareahistory.com), the voice of history and historic preservation in greater Cleveland. With a background in art, he writes local history as you've never seen it before, focusing on the visual narrative. His first book, "Hidden History of Cleveland", was published by History Press last November.

The tour will start and end in the parking lot of New Life Cathedral, at 16200 Euclid Avenue, East Cleveland, Ohio. Note that the parking lot is behind the church, and can be accessed from Nela Avenue. Please park on the street.

Twilight Rocket Excursion to Cleveland's Tourist Attractions of the Future, with the Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative **Date, Time TBA**

Take a rocket ship ride to a speculative Cleveland, full of attractions still in the making, led by the Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative. Visit www.SPACESgallery.org for further event details and how to make reservations.

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May 27 - June 24, 2012 **Beautiful Possibility Pop Up Exhibition** **Location and Hours TBD.**

San Francisco artist Alison Pebworth's cross country travelling show will set up shop near the West Side Market for the month of June. *Beautiful Possibility* takes the prototype of the 19th century American Traveling show as inspiration for asking people across the country about what it means to be American. Pebworth's show uses the elaborate graphics of Wild West show posters to re-tell American history. As part of her journey, Pebworth is surveying people at stops across America on their thoughts about "Americanitis," a curious 19th century nervous condition resulting from rapid modernization, first identified by neurologist George M. Beard in 1861. The condition was later exploited by medicine shows that peddled "Americanitis Elixirs" to "relieve stress and calm the nerves."

Pebworth is partnering with urban farmers in Cleveland to make special "Cleveland Elixirs". You can take Pebworth's Americanitis survey, sample elixirs and join the conversation at Pebworth's Pop Up space in Ohio City.

Goodnight Cleveland: A Little Miss Cleveland Bus Tour **Friday, July 13th, 8:00 pm – 1:00 am** **Meet: At SPACES** **Cost: \$18 SPACES members, \$22 non-members *** **Register: www.SPACESgallery.org/shop/tickets**

* Includes entrance into the 2nd Annual Wonderful Fest at Now That's Class.

Cap off closing night of *The Cleveland Convention and Visitors Bureau* at SPACES with a whirlwind tour of some of the city's best musical holes-in-the-walls. Little Miss Cleveland takes us on a flaming sunset party bus tour, winding about town and ending up at the 2nd Annual Wonderful Fest at Now That's Class.

Tour starts and ends at SPACES. No one under 21 admitted. Sponsored by Now That's Class.

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Promotional support by:



SPACES is located at 2220 Superior Viaduct, in Cleveland, OH. Gallery hours are Tuesday - Sunday: 12 – 5 p.m., and the gallery is open until 8 p.m. on Thursdays. Admission (and parking) during regular gallery hours is free and open to the public. For more information, visit www.SPACESgallery.org, call 216.621.2314 or email contact@SPACESgallery.org.