

For immediate release –January 24, 2008
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*print resolution images available upon request

Urban Culture Project presents

“MAPPING THE TOW LOT”
WITH MIKI BAIRD, DAN MAGINN, AND MATT DEHAEMERS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 6 PM AT PARAGRAPH, 23 E. 12TH STREET, KC MO
(DOORS OPEN AT 5:30)

organized in conjunction with *Miki Baird: Tow Lot Vanitas*
& *locate | navigate: exercises in mapping*



“Mapping the Tow Lot” is an evening of presentations and conversation among two artists and one architect, all currently involved in creative work focused on the Kansas City Vehicle Impound Facility, aka “the tow lot.” Approaching the tow lot from widely different orientations and working toward radically different ends, Miki Baird, Dan Maginn and Matt Dehaemers will come together to share their tow lot related perspectives, experiences and projects.

Kansas City artist Miki Baird will discuss her highly personal, intensive process of documenting the current Kansas City, Missouri tow lot and her resulting photo-based exhibition, *Tow Lot Vanitas*, on view at Paragraph gallery January 18-February 9. With assistance from the Municipal Arts Commission and the Neighborhood and Community Services Department of Kansas City, Baird obtained permission to work on site at 6817 Stadium Drive for a period of four months in 2007, during which time she produced an extensive body of images and documentation. *Tow Lot Vanitas* is composed of photographic images that Baird captured at close range from the inside and the outside of vehicles stored at the tow lot. “The grounds are full of facts and in some ways resemble a landfill, a repository...My challenge is to communicate through my art, in the best way I can, the information found in the bits and pieces of images retrieved from each vehicle,” writes Baird.

Dan Maginn, a partner at el dorado, inc. architects, is the architect of the new Kansas City Vehicle Impound Facility, under construction, which will be a new 40 acre sustainably-designed development in

East Kansas City, MO. The project is comprised of three structures: administration, operations and storage, and three separately gated storage lots for a total of 1,800 impounded vehicles. Sustainable features on the project included an advanced stormwater management system, a highly efficient HVAC system, functional daylighting and a high degree of recycled materials. The buildings will use only 40% of the energy required to power a similarly designed building without sustainable features. The project is registered with the United States Green Building Council, and is tracking at the Gold level of certification.

Kansas City artist Matt Dehaemers is the One-Percent-for-Art public artist for the new Vehicle Impound Facility, awarded the project through the Municipal Art Commission. Dehaemers' inspiration for the public artwork comes from decades of family's history in the auto salvage business. The project encompasses seven kinetic structures spaced out along the dividing median island near the exit of the facility at Front Street. Seven parking control arm structures have been altered and elevated in height to extend above and out over the street. As an outbound vehicle approaches the median, the arms of the structures will sequentially in a wave-like pattern raise up while their car continues toward the exit. The piece makes tangible the sense of passage and release upon exiting the impound lot, and alludes to the tradition of an honor guard that often greeted heads of state as they arrived in another country.

This public presentation and discussion is free and open to the public.

An initiative of the Charlotte Street Foundation, Urban Culture Project creates new opportunities for artists of all disciplines and contributes to urban revitalization by transforming spaces in downtown Kansas City into new venues for multi-disciplinary contemporary arts programming. For more information, visit www.urbancultureproject.org or email info@charlottestreet.org.

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