



HarborArts, Inc.

Boston Harbor Shipyard
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For Immediate Release (East Boston, June 8, 2013)

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HarborArts Presents:

Occupy(ING) THE PRESENT

An Exhibition of Temporary Site-Responsive Art at the Boston Harbor Shipyard and Marina, East Boston

June 29 through September 22, 2013, open dawn to dusk

Opening Reception Saturday, June 29, 3:00-8:00 PM

June 29 Opening Events:

Family Sculptural activities with exhibiting artists 3:30-5 PM

Artist tours, hourly from 3:15-6:15

Jazz Concert 6---7:30 PM ***The Joel Press Combo***

Summer events: (check for updates www.HarborArts.org, or www.StudiosWithoutWalls.org.)

Artist-led talks and tours Thursday evenings 6:30 PM ---July 11 and August 8

Saturday tours 4PM ---July 20, August 17, Sept. 14 and 21

Harbor Arts Festival and Closing Reception Saturday Sept 21.

Artists:

***Myrna Balk Jamaica Plain
Gail Jerauld Bos Jamaica Plain
Catherine Evans Maynard
Susan Israel Newton
Karen Klein Cambridge
Bette Ann Libby Brookline
Peter Lipsitt Brookline
Lyn MacDonald Arlington***

***Gwen Ossenfort Brookline
John Powell Boston
Maria Ritz Cambridge
Kerri Schmidt Jamaica Plain
Nora Valdez Boston
Barbara Vogelsang Boston
Wendy Wolf Newton***

Liz Nofziger East Boston

(East Boston, June 8, 2013) Opening Saturday, June 29, HarborArts, Inc. of East Boston presents a summer-long exhibition of temporary outdoor sculpture and installation on the waterfront at the Boston Harbor Shipyard and Marina in East Boston, through September 21. Curated by Brookline sculptor, videographer, and critic Elizabeth Michelman, **OccupyING the Present** expands the sculpture park's collection of twenty-five semi-permanent works with sixteen new site-responsive pieces by Boston area artists. The works transform the materials and forms of Boston Harbor and the neighborhood of East Boston into a dialogue about impermanence, change, and creative thinking.

The opening celebration on Saturday June 29 from 3-8PM will include refreshments, family-oriented sculpture activities, a curator's talk, and an evening jazz concert by the Joel Press Combo. Artist tours are offered throughout the summer, with Thursday evening artist-led talks July 11 and August 8 at 6:30 PM, and Saturday tours July 20, August 17, Sept. 14 and 21 at 4:00 PM. The season closes with the HarborArts Festival all day on September 21. Further information and schedule of summer events at www.HarborArts.org, or www.StudiosWithoutWalls.org.

***** FULL TEXT

HarborArts, Inc. presents a summer-long exhibition of outdoor temporary art, opening June 29 at the Boston Harbor Shipyard and Marina, in East Boston, within view of the downtown skyline. Curated by sculptor and critic Elizabeth Michelman, **OccupyING THE PRESENT** features 16 new works of site-responsive installation and sculpture that connect with their environment. According to Michelman, "This exhibition of experimental sculpture invited Boston area artists and friends of Brookline's Studios Without Walls to create temporary structures that connect with their surroundings. The diverse works highlight impermanence and change, both in the community and in the environment, while asking what we mean by "occupying the present."

The mixed uses of a busy marina and a vital industrial waterfront at the Boston Harbor Shipyard, as well as the natural, historical, and social context of East Boston and Boston's Inner Harbor inspire and inform the art. Through a variety of artistic play, the artists have redeployed and transformed the observed characteristics and found materials of the waterfront to make the familiar strange, and the strange, familiar. Tragic or comic, subtle or outrageous, all the works provoke thought and promote discovery within a lively visual field.

Adding to HarborArts's collection of over 25 semi-permanent sculptures from a previous exhibition of international artists, the 17 new site-responsive works each claim a special niche from which to proclaim their precarious being in the present moment. Many are simple but striking forms, like Peter Lipsitt's rubber-clad pyramid on stilts, **Hell and High Water**, and John Powell's **Crinkle Crackle Sparkle**, ribbons of reflective Mylar that convert glints of wave and sun into a spiritual experience. Karen Klein's **Tide-Tables** incorporate a numerical chart of the daily tides into literal furniture, reflecting forces can be described and computed but not controlled.

Other techniques range from the traditional, (Nora Valdez's carved limestone **Still Waiting**, a headless nude crouching by the water's edge), to the conceptual (architect Susan Israel's **Rising Tide**, whose messages in tiny bottles and painted stripe along a distant pier warn us of encroaching sea levels). Catherine Evans's "plantings" of swaying gimp **Anemones** speak of immortality. Barbara Vogelsang's

Home Improvements of waving fabric palms at the doorway to a floating shed suggests a light-hearted adaptation to the stress of global warming.

Drawing and painting are renewed as outdoor disciplines. Wendy Wolf's wheat-paste drawings of kelp on red-brick walls, **Natural Repetition: Boston Harbor Rockweed** bring Nature's rhythms to the fore. Gwen Ossenfort's nostalgic wall portrait made with fishing line and netting catches the impression of a wizened fisherman. Bette Ann Libby's weatherproof **Portholes** integrate the colors of a rusting fence with reflections of city and inner views. Marine flora and fauna abound, including **Time Out**, Maria Ritz's sea-creatures lurching up the sea walls and Lyn MacDonald's **Organism From the Depths of Time**, undulating tube worms made from foam swimming noodles and copper scrubbers.

Both darker and brighter views of civilization also emerge: Gail Jerauld Bos's floating amphitheater of empty **Children's Chairs** mourns the costs of urban violence. Kerri Schmidt's bubble of plastic bags from the **Plastic Planet Series** alerts us to the reality of a floating continent of pollution on the high seas. Myrna Balk's steel assemblage **Community** welds together diverse component parts hailing from different neighborhoods of Boston. Liz Nofziger's **Soundings** explores the architecture's past and present while imagining a future, activating a non-space with audio.

***** * **The living context** of this exhibition: The sculpture and installations of "OccupyING The Present" explore East Boston and Boston Harbor Shipyard as subject, material, background, and site. The East Boston Shipyard inhabits a charged boundary between land, sea, and sky, where the rhythms of nature and human activities change fluidly, according to clock and calendar. East Boston is a historically vibrant urban community, evolving and changing while serving as an entry point for commerce, visitors, and immigrants. The Shipyard's commanding position at the neck of Boston's Inner Harbor registers the pressures of ecological coexistence, the increasing decimation of species, and the encroachment of worldwide climate change.

***** * **Two community art projects** directed by sculptors of Brookline's Studios Without Walls will accompany the exhibition. Children and families of East Boston's James Otis School will collect and donate their own porcelain fragments to collaborate with sculptor Bette Ann Libby in September on a mosaic interpretation of Hokusai's "The Wave." Myrna Balk and Louise Farrell will teach local residents at Heritage Apartments **The Art of Monoprinting** culminating in an exhibition in the Heritage community space in the fall.

***** * **Elizabeth Michelman, Curator**, is a sculptor, video artist, and critic with a fascination for the ways we control and are controlled by language. She writes on sculpture, video art, installation, and curatorial concepts for the New England bimonthly *Artscope Magazine*. She has received numerous grants for her art and her curatorial work, including from the East Boston Foundation, The Massachusetts Cultural Council (finalist for "Works on Paper"), The Brookline Commission for the Arts, The Brookline Community Fund, and the North Attleboro Arts Council. She also has taught exhibitions at Massachusetts College of Art.

***** * **HarborArts, Inc.** is a unique waterfront sculpture park on a working industrial sea-going harbor. It has maintained an outdoor sculpture "gallery" in the 14-acre Boston Harbor Shipyard since 2010. The site hosts both permanent and temporary exhibits and educates the public about social, economic, and environmental issues affecting our harbors, waterways, and oceans. Partial funding

for this exhibition has been generously provided through a matching grant program from the East Boston Foundation. Donations to support the exhibition are welcome through www.HarborArts.org.