

For Immediate Release:
Artspace Presents:
The Play House: Beyond What Was
October 5–22, 2012

ARTSPACE

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These are extraordinarily difficult times, requiring creative minds to take action. "Engaged" or "social" art is gaining traction in contemporary art as a way to collectively reimagine and reshape our future. Art is not just a commodity—at best, it's a flexible, challenging process that gives form to fresh ideas, which in turn creates something new.

– Marianne Bernstein, curator

In conjunction with the 15th annual City-Wide Open Studios, a festival that has always celebrated the vibrant contributions of New Haven's artistic community, Artspace will host The Play House, a multi-faceted installation in the Lot. Artspace will team with Marianne Bernstein, one of the founders of City-Wide Open Studios, to bring The Play House to New Haven. This site-specific installation will host artists-in-residence during each of the CWOS weekends; at night, the cube will be wrapped to become a four-sided projection space. The project will also feature partnerships with Liberty Community Services and Creative Arts Workshop. In August, two of the participating artists, Darwin Nix and Keliy Staley-Anderson, began creating portraits of Liberty Community Services patrons; then they utilized the printmaking facilities and guidance of Creative Arts Workshop faculty member Barbara Harder and Master Printer Cindi Ettinger to make prints. This project presents a unique opportunity to extend the reach of CWOS and serve the community by activating a space at the heart of downtown New Haven.

ABOUT THE PLAY HOUSE

The Play House is a transparent, nomadic 8' X 8' aluminum cube which functions as a studio by day and a four-sided video installation by night. As a conceptual work, The Play House is layered; it functions from the inside out. Designed to activate neglected spaces, an artist interacts with the public inside the cube daily. This interaction is filmed and participants are invited to return and watch themselves projected onto the cube's exterior each night.

The following artists will be featured inside the cube in New Haven, CT:
Darwin Nix (October 6/7)

Keliy Anderson-Staley (October 13/14)

Marianne Bernstein with Liberty Community Services Clients (October 20/21)

Video by Danielle Lessovitz

After Effects editing by Katya Gorker.

Technical production by Peter Parker Brodhead and Paul Theriault.

The Play House was designed in collaboration with Daryn Edwards of Interface Studio Architects and fabricated by EnMotion Design.

HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

Marianne Bernstein curated, made art, and taught photography in New Haven for 17 years (1984–2000) eventually founding untitled(space) and The Lot—as well as City-Wide Open Studios, alongside Artspace Executive Director Helen Kauder and Linn Meyers. As an artist and curator, Ms. Bernstein felt the need both then and now to engage and involve the public more, while simultaneously pushing her own creative boundaries.

After moving to Philadelphia ten years ago, Ms. Bernstein has curated more public installations: *The Welcome House* (2009 in Love Park), *Shelter* (2009 at The Painted Bride), *The Philadelphia Underground* (2010, subway concourse near Dilworth Plaza), and *The Play House* (2011, Not a Vacant Lot, in an empty lot across from The Kimmel Center). Each project brought together talented artists in unique ways to create new work about a particular place or subject.

Last year, *The Play House: Not A Vacant Lot* debuted in an empty Lot on Broad Street in Philadelphia, across from the Kimmel Center. Calling attention to the fact that there are 40,000 empty lots in Philadelphia, twelve artists-teams were invited to activate vacant lots throughout Philadelphia and document their work through short films. These films were then projected on the exterior of the Play House each night. During the day, young, up-and-coming Philadelphia musicians performed inside the cube. For more contextual information please visit: <http://phillyplayhouse.tumblr.com/>

THE ARTISTS

October 6/7: DARWIN NIX

Artist, and former heroin addict, Darwin Nix (<http://darwinnix.com/>) will work with Philadelphia master printer Cindi Ettinger to create a series of abstract etchings and paintings referencing hip consumer marketing of drug culture. Mr. Nix will be an artist in residence at Liberty Community Services, near the Lot, in August and will create a continuous drawing inside the cube in October.

October 13/14: KELIY ANDERSON-STALEY

Keliy Anderson-Staley (<http://www.andersonstaley.com>) will create wet plate collodian (tintype) portrait plates of regular Lot visitors. She will begin the plates at Liberty Community Services in August and will continue the work on site, inside the cube, in October.

October 20/21: Marianne Bernstein with Liberty Community Services Clients
Marianne Bernstein will take residence in the Cube for the final weekend of City-Wide Open Studios—during this time she will collaborate with clients from Liberty Community Services. The Liberty Community Services clients will bring their unique perspectives, along with an intimate knowledge of the highs and lows of New Haven, to their time in the Play House.

All work created in August at Liberty Community Services by Keliy Anderson-Staley and Darwin Nix will be exhibited in Gallery 5 at Artspace during City-Wide Open Studios. The opening night for the exhibition, as well as the CWOS Festival Exhibition, will be on October 5, 2012 at Artspace.

Artspace's exhibitions are made possible thanks to support from the Andy Warhol Foundation, the Connecticut Office of the Arts, the Community Foundation of Greater New Haven, and the City of New Haven Economic Development Office.

City-Wide Open Studios is made possible thanks to support from First Niagara Charitable Foundation, Yale University, and the New Haven Register. Artspace would also like to thank Liberty Community Services and Creative Arts Workshop for their warm support of the project.

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