

# STUDIO MUSEUM HARLEM

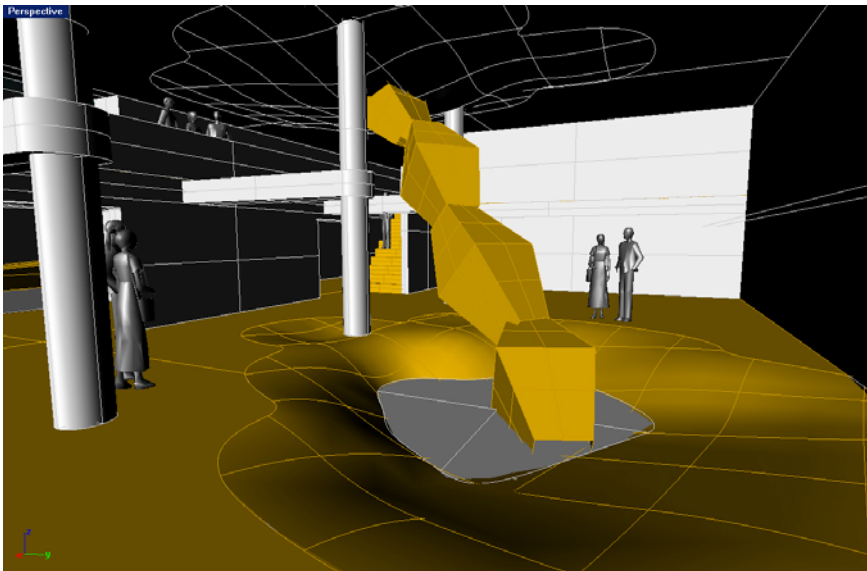
## For Immediate Release

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## *Philosophy of Time Travel*

*The past and future flow through a monumental collaborative installation at The Studio Museum in Harlem*

On view: April 11, 2007 through July 1, 2007



Matthew Sloly, CAD drawing, 2006  
Courtesy the artist

**NEW YORK, NY, March 15, 2007** – What if history had a mind of its own, moving from the past, through the present and into the future? A team of five artists is exploring this idea with a large-scale installation, *Philosophy of Time Travel*, opening April 11, 2007, at The Studio Museum in Harlem. The installation evokes the work of modernist sculptor Constantin Brancusi (1876-1957), forcefully and dynamically pushing his massive 1938 work, *Endless Column*, through the Studio Museum's gallery space. The result is a fictional world in which history comes to life, crashes through the exhibition space, and traverses through histories of art and museums.

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"*Philosophy of Time Travel* harnesses Brancusi's seminal, classic modernist work to challenge the contemporary, as if the sculpture grew beyond its bounds and appeared, by magic or some cryptic science, in the Studio Museum," says Christine Y. Kim, Associate Curator at the Studio Museum in Harlem. "By being installed here, at a culturally specific art institution, its commentaries on the nature of history and time are also variously applied to the histories and structures of Harlem and African Americans."

Brancusi's *Endless Column*, an outdoor sculpture in Târgu Jiu, Romania, is a 100-foot tall series of cast-iron rhombus shapes, resembling a stylized version of a traditional Romanian funerary pillar. In angling the vertical modules through the Studio Museum's galleries—four of them penetrate through from floor to ceiling—the artists also recall the imagined flight of Brancusi's classic *Bird in Space* series, one of modernism's great evocations of movement and grace. The installation brings the outside in, the past into the future, and the still into sinuous movement, shattering the walls of the museum space and the present alike.

The installation will also include an introductory video with the innovative music of Sun Ra, who had a "cosmic philosophy" of his own. The five artists involved in the project, Edgar Arceneaux, Vincent Galen Johnson, Olga Koumoundouros, Rodney McMillian and Matthew Sloly, studied together at CalArts and have been involved in a wide range of solo and group exhibitions around the world. They work in different media, from sculpture to photography to digital technology, but often find common ground. In this case, the 2001 cult film *Donnie Darko*, which features an imaginary book called *The Philosophy of Time Travel* inspired them to think about how art history bends back on itself.

Organized by Associate Curator Christine Y. Kim, *Philosophy of Time Travel* will be on display from April 11, 2007 through July 1, 2007 in the Studio Museum's main and alcove galleries. A DVD and full-color catalogue with approximately 112 pages and three scholarly essays by Lowery Stokes Sims, Hilton Als and Christine Y. Kim will be available in the Museum Store.

#### **About the Artists**

*Philosophy of Time Travel* is the product of collaboration among five artists who have worked together and provided invaluable critiques for one another over the past decade. Their symbiotic intellectual pursuits and creative endeavors are no accident. Edgar Arceneaux and Vincent Galen Johnson met at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena in the mid-1990s. An avid student of photography, architecture and theory, Johnson, who is regarded as a mentor in the group, received his MFA in 1997 and moved to Banff, Canada, for an artist-in-residence program, where he met Matthew Sloly. Sloly started traveling to Los Angeles regularly upon Johnson's encouragement and with his help developed his art practice and relationships with other artists of color engaged in critical theory and science. Arceneaux then entered the MFA program at California Institute of the Arts in 1999, where he met sculptor Olga Koumoundouros in the seminal course on post-colonial theory taught by artist and mentor Charles Gaines. Rodney McMillian came to CalArts the following year and joined the emerging collective of artists and thinkers contemplating the intersections of art, culture and race. In 2001, Sloly moved to Los Angeles and began the MFA program at Art Center, the same year that Johnson's work was included in *Freestyle* at the Studio Museum.

This collaboration was conceived in 2003. "We had all worked around and with each other," says McMillian, who now teaches painting at CalArts, "either independently or in small groups. Eventually we just merged." They have exhibited their work together at numerous museums and art spaces in Los Angeles, such as the UCLA Hammer Museum, LA><ART and REDCAT Gallery. Sloly has since returned to Toronto, while the remaining four still live and work in the Los Angeles area.

*Philosophy of Time Travel* is funded, in part, by a grant from the Peggy Cooper Cafritz Foundation of The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region, with additional support from the Creative Capital Foundation and Canada Council for the Arts. The Studio Museum is also indebted to several individuals and organizations for their generous in-kind support, including the Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena; architects Yeh + Jerrard LLC; structural engineers Gilsanz Murray Steficek LLP; Side Street Projects and Interior Removal Services; and Kurt Foreman.

## EDUCATION & PUBLIC PROGRAMS

In conjunction with the summer 2006 season of exhibitions and projects, The Studio Museum in Harlem's Department of Education and Public Programs offers a range of programs, activities and events that will incorporate artists, scholars, and critics into thought-provoking discussions on a wide variety of issues central to the works on view in the exhibition. For more information on public programs, please visit [www.studiomuseum.org](http://www.studiomuseum.org), or call 212-864-4500 (ext. 264).

## ABOUT THE STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM

The Studio Museum in Harlem is a contemporary art museum that focuses on the work of artists of African descent locally, nationally, and globally, as well as work that has been inspired and influenced by African-American culture, through its exhibitions, Artists-in-Residence program, education and public programming, permanent collection, and archival and research facilities. The Studio Museum in Harlem is committed to serving as a unique resource in its



Photo: Ray A. Llanos

local community and in national and international arenas by making art works and exhibitions concrete and personal for each viewer and providing a context within which to address the contemporary and historical issues presented through art created by artists of African descent.

Since opening in a rented loft at Fifth Avenue and 125th Street in 1968, the Studio Museum has earned recognition for its catalytic role in promoting the works of artists of African descent. The Museum's Artists-In-Residence program has supported over 90 graduates who have gone on to establish highly regarded careers.

A wide variety of Education and Public Programs have brought the African-American experience alive for the public by means of lectures, dialogues, panel discussions, and performances, as well as interpretive programs, both on- and off-site, for students and teachers. The Exhibitions program has also expanded the scope of art historical literature through the production of scholarly catalogues, brochures and pamphlets.

The Studio Museum's Permanent Collection contains over 1,600 works, including drawings, pastels, prints, photographs, mixed media works, and installations. It is comprised of works created by artists during their residency, as well as pieces given to the Museum to create an art historical framework for artists of African descent. Featured in the collection are Romare Bearden, Robert Colescott, Jacob Lawrence, Norman Lewis, Chris Ofili, Betye Saar, Lorna Simpson, Kara Walker and Hale Woodruff. The Museum also is the custodian of an extensive archive of the work of photographer James VanDerZee, the quintessential chronicler of the Harlem community from 1906 to 1984.

Operation of the Studio Museum in Harlem is supported with public funds provided by The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and Council member Inez E. Dickens, 9th C.D.; Speaker Christine Quinn; and the New York City Council. Major funding is also provided by The Peter Jay Sharp Foundation and The Carnegie Corporation of New York, with additional support from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency; The Starr Foundation; The New York Times Company Foundation; David Zwirner; Estate of Irene Wheeler; The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation; JP Morgan Chase; the Scherman Foundation, Inc.; Tishman Speyer; The Norman and Rosita Winston Foundation, Inc.; Estate of Bobby Short; The Joyce A. Wein Memorial Fund; Citigroup Foundation; LEF Foundation; gifts in honor of William P. Lewis, Jr.; American Express Company; The Cowles Charitable Trust; Goldman Sachs; Corine Pettey; Altria Group Inc.; Credit Suisse First Boston; Pfizer, Inc.; Tiffany & Co.; Sandra Grymes; Gordon J. Davis and Peggy Cooper Davis; Federated Department Stores; Oliver Kramm; Pierre and Maria-Gaetana Matisse Foundation; The Moody's Foundation; H. van Ameringen Foundation; and Jide Zeitlin.

## ADDRESS

The Studio Museum in Harlem is located at 144 West 125th Street, between Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard and Lenox Avenue. Subway: A, B, C, D, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 to 125th Street. Bus: M-2, M-7, M-10, M-100, M-101, M-102 or BX-15.

## ADMISSION

Suggested donation: \$7 for adults, \$3 for students (with valid id) and seniors. Free for children 12 and under. The first Saturday of every month is free for everyone.

**HOURS**

The museum is open Wednesday through Friday, and Sunday from 12 – 6, and from 10 – 6 on Saturday. The Museum is closed on Monday, Tuesday and major holidays.

Phone: 212 864 4500/ fax: 212 864- 4800/ Web site: [www.studiomuseum.org](http://www.studiomuseum.org).

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