



## Overlaps and Relocations: New Architecture at the Site Santa Fe Biennial Lucky No. 7

by Jean Pike

Site Santa Fe's generic warehouse space was transformed for its 7th Biennial into a rich spatial experience by architects Todd Williams and Billie Tsien and unveiled during weekend opening events June 20-22. The architecture that was inserted into the space was an armature for movement and viewing and provides the thread that holds together a show of site-specific work by 25 artists from 16 countries.

Todd Williams and Billie Tsien, who had used ideas about "spatial curiosity" and "approaching" to generate a previous project with curator Lance Fung for the Snow Show in Torino, developed peripatetic ways of moving through the Site exhibition space that offer elevation changes (ramps, steps, balconies and raised walkways) and the possibility to perceive space, art and people from multiple angles, heights and perspectives. Spaces for moving become event spaces: locations for stopping, gathering, looking, listening, sitting, talking, art-making and other random actions.

The exhibition space is largely defined by the presence of the surfaces upon which and within which one moves. Vertical walls, where they exist, are sometimes punctured, sometimes partial, allowing for moments of spatial transparency, parallax and specific perspective views. Because of the complex ways of moving and looking at the art one starts to perceive an overlap, an overlapping of spaces, of art, of one artist's work upon another and of one location upon another, of digital onto analog and vice versa. The idea of spatial overlap and extension mixes with the content and concepts of the art: paintings of internet images made in Korea and



photo: Megan Fisher McHugh, courtesy of santafelucky7.com



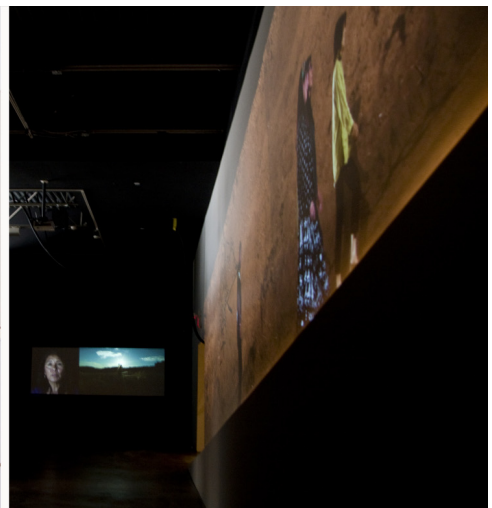
photos: Jean Pike



paintings of internet images made in Santa Fe (artist Soun Myung Hong), Mnemonic connections between disparate locations such as that which exist between Studio Azzurro's interactive video projection, *Fourth Ladder*, and actual ramps with actual people climbing on them within the exhibition space, work like an alternating montage between digital and analog. *Abduction*, a work by Fabian Giraud and Raphaël Siboni also references alternate locations. Their piece, taken from a Santa Fe gallery, was transformed, installed at Site, and is



photos: BayAreaEventPhotography.com



intended to be relocated back to its original gallery after the Biennial closes, having been transformed yet again. Even the materials used for the architectural construction of the exhibition will be dismantled and reused elsewhere at the end of the show. Be it literal or conceptual, the offsite projects are now also overlapped onto the site, and a sort of simultaneity begins to occur. Work created elsewhere and the sensibilities of artists from elsewhere, an interest in recyclable art-making materials and a spatial experience that, through movement and view, emphasizes montage, are all brought to bear on the site and reverberate back outward beyond its confines.

At the front, the new transparent entrance structure, built with manufactured materials, is a contemporary version of the traditional New Mexican ramada, a trellis-like structure made from wood branches that provides ventilation and shade in the harsh summer months. It's moving shadows mix with the simulated and static (painted) projection images of Michal Budny and Zbigniew Rogalski's *Slideshow* and vibrate with the complexity of here and now and then and somewhere else all at the same time. With the addition of the piece by Rose B. Simpson, Eliza Naranjo Morse and Nora Naranjo Morse snaking through, it makes a great introduction to the show, revealing all the passion and energy of the artists', architects' and curators' work.

Can we, as Christine Boyer asks in reference to postmodern cities, "find the unity of community in this fragmented experience?" At Site we see our stories overlapping into new and exciting configurations that offer the promise of an even greater community, no matter how complex.





photos: Jean Pike