



Takashi Horisaki

Takashi Horisaki is a Brooklyn-based sculptor and performance artist whose site-specific artwork, *Social Dress Buffalo: The Past Reflecting the Future*, is a deeply affecting response to the housing crisis in Buffalo. Addressing this poverty-rooted regional issue as a global concern, Horisaki draws parallels to restoration and disaster relief efforts in the wake of his native Japan's Great Hanshin earthquake of 1995 and Hurricane Katrina, which struck not long after his relocation from New Orleans, where he lived from 2000 to 2003. With support from non-profit organizations Buffalo ReUse (East-side contractors specializing in green demolition) and PUSH Buffalo (grassroots activists working to rebuild the West side), the artist gained access to existing abandoned houses and building materials from recently demolished homes on both sides of the segregated city. Working on-site with over thirty volunteers, including BAS Jump Start students and interns from area high school and university visual arts and architecture programs, Horisaki spent a month in Buffalo conversing with local leaders, exploring neighborhoods, and casting facades of boarded-up buildings with cheesecloth and liquid latex. The resulting "skins," in an assortment of shapes and colors reflecting the aesthetic decisions of his assistants, illustrate Buffalo's rich and varied architectural landscape, highlighting historic brickwork, hand-painted storefront signs, graffiti, and other ornate details that define the city and its inhabitants. In an effort to build "a monument to the past that also serves as inspiration for the future," Horisaki and project participants constructed a self-contained geodesic dome to the height of an average adult; the casts were then laid on top to create a durable tent-like structure in the gallery which incorporates philosophies of primitivism, utopia, and a do-it-yourself ethic and aesthetic. Beyond the creation of this communal center for dialogue, he further involved citizens through hands-on casting demonstrations, tool instruction, and youth drawing workshops with the West-side PS 45 International School and East-side Gloria J. Parks Community Center. Held at People's Park, a transformed vacant lot adjacent to BAS that serves as a centrally located community garden and art space, the *plein air* classes invited children to experience their city while promoting diversity and cultural understanding through the introduction of traditional Japanese art materials and techniques. The goals of the artist's residency were to cultivate awareness and solidarity among the city's future leaders with the hope that, through imagination, dedication, and resourcefulness, one day all Buffalonians will enjoy the right to safe, affordable, sustainable housing.

Takashi Horisaki was born in Tokyo and currently lives and works in New York. He holds a BFA from Loyola University in New Orleans; an MFA from Washington University in St. Louis, MO; and a BA from Waseda University in Tokyo. His work has been exhibited nationally and internationally at locations including the Deutsches Hygiene-Museum, Dresden (2008); Socrates Sculpture Park, NY (2007); Flux Factory Inc, Queens (2006-07); The LAB Gallery, San Francisco (2006); Collins C. Diboll Art Gallery, New Orleans (2006); Murray Guy Gallery, NY (2005); the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis (2004); SCOPE London (2004); Elliot Smith Contemporary Art Gallery, St. Louis (2004); Jonathan Ferrara Gallery, New Orleans (2002); and the International Sculpture Center Annual Conference (2004). He is the recipient of awards including the Dedalus Foundation Master of Fine Arts Fellowship and the Socrates Sculpture Park Open Space program grant. Most recently, he has been commissioned to create works for the Queens Museum of Art, NY; Smack Mellon, NY; and Southeastern Louisiana University. Horisaki is a 2004 fellowship recipient from the Urban Artist Initiative/New York City and participated in Prospect.1 New Orleans in 2008.



Megan Michalak & Stephanie Rothenberg

Megan Michalak and Stephanie Rothenberg's *World X Diagnostics* is a conceptual interactive installation that solicits visitors' responses to a series of questions regarding their perceived level of efficiency of civil institutions in their homelands following the 2008 World Financial Crisis. As the artists describe, "Just as the color-coded 'terror alert system' within the US is used to diagnose and alert the public to outside threats to 'national security,' this project appropriates this operative logic and applies it to threats of economic and social collapse caused by the corruption of the socio-political system from within." Akin to artists Tellervo Kalleinen and Oliver Kochta-Kalleinen's "Complaints Choirs," which transform the discontent of participants into commanding song performances, the work consists of a computer database connected to a hand-made pipe organ that channels users' indignation with their government into sound. In light of the housing and stock market crashes, bankruptcies and bailouts, and diminished personal wealth and consumerism, the outright raucous sounds produced by the organ bear testimony to the present level of civil unrest (though, admittedly, the working prototype is currently incapable of producing harmonious tones). Fittingly, while the pipe organ is often affiliated with church services, it originated as a secular instrument; in fact, during the Baroque period, changing political climates dictated the different styles of organs that were developed. It was considered the most complex human-made device from the seventeenth to the late-nineteenth century, when it was replaced by the telephone. In the spirit of this trivia, through live audio/video feed, visitors attending the opening of the concurrent **2nd Moscow International Biennale** will have the ability to input data into a digital interface which will trigger sounds from the sculpture at BAS on **Saturday, July 3, 2010**.

Megan Michalak's work has been internationally exhibited at the 2nd Moscow International Biennale, Galerie Titanik (Finland), Fonds Régional D'Art Contemporain Frac Languedoc-Roussillon (France), the International Festival of Choreography in Paris, and media festivals in Spain, Mexico, and Brazil. Within the US she has shown at the Bronx Museum of the Arts, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Art Interactive, Artists Space, Arthouse at the Jones Center, Dance Theater Workshop, and Smack Mellon. She is the recipient of a Film, Media and New Technology grant from the New York State Council on the Arts, three Finishing Funds grants from the Experimental Television Center, and an Artist Fellowship from Smack Mellon Studios. She recently was an artist in residence at SUMU Media Arts Residency in Finland, Binaural Media in Portugal, and Harvestworks and the MacDowell Colony in the US. Michalak received an MFA in Sculpture from Bard College in 2001, and an MFA in Studio for Interrelated Media from the Massachusetts College of Art in 2006. She currently is Assistant Professor in the Department of Visual Studies at the State University of New York, Buffalo.

Stephanie Rothenberg has exhibited, performed, and lectured in the US and internationally at venues including the 2008 Sundance Film Festival, 2004/2009 ISEA, Whitney Museum of Art Internet Art portal, 2008 Zer01/01SJ Global Festival of Art on the Edge, Banff New Media Institute, LABoral Center for Art, Amsterdam International Film Festival, Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center, Conflux Festival, InterAccess Media Arts Center, Bent Festival, Chicago Underground Film Festival, Trampoline Radiator Festival for New Technology Art, Knitting Factory, Studio XX, and The Central Academy of Fine Art in Beijing. Recent awards include a 2009 Creative Capital in Emerging Fields and a 2008 New York State Council on the Arts Individual Artist Award. She has been a resident at Eyebeam Art & Technology Center and Harvestworks Media Art Center in NY, and at the free103point9 Wave Farm in Upstate NY. Rothenberg received her MFA in 2003 from the Department of Film, Video, and New Media at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She is currently Associate Professor of Visual Studies at SUNY Buffalo, where she teaches courses in Communication Design and Emerging Practices.



James Paulsen

James Paulsen's new series of paintings titled *Transformation of the Public Sphere* takes as its subject matter the widely disputed placement of over fifty public surveillance cameras around Buffalo in 2008 (following a late cue from nearby Olean, which was the first US city to install video cameras in its main business district in an attempt to deter crime). His provocative works subtly confront this elusive eye in the sky, challenging viewers to critically examine its repercussions; despite countless conflicting reports concerning the effectiveness of the cameras in thwarting and prosecuting criminals, the artist suggests that "the implementation of this political technology signals a cynical lack of imagination among our leaders, adding to a continuing trend of dehumanization." Analogous to religions which honor omniscient gods, they represent an attempt to enforce morality through Orwellian tactics of fear and paranoia. Paulsen's paintings elegantly capture this chilling reality through the depiction of the cameras as invasive probing tools reflecting a skewed view of our world. Because many cameras are programmed to recognize "suspicious" acts such as yelling, waving one's hands, or walking against a crowd of people, they promote a dangerous level of conformity and normalization, particularly threatening to artists and other eccentric or dissident minds. Furthermore, as opponents of CCTV have argued, the introduction of cameras in one region often merely displaces crime to other more private locations. In a city with ten thousand abandoned buildings serving as potential havens for arson, drug abuse, and violence, perhaps the focus of our efforts and spending should be shifted from surveillance to the active resolution of foundational issues such as unemployment, unequal education and health care, discrimination, hunger, and homelessness, which directly or indirectly result in crime. By revealing technology's inability to capture the essence of an entire neighborhood and adequately solve its problems from a single removed perspective, Paulsen's works call for an urgent reconsideration of our approaches to social reform.

- Cori Wolff, Exhibitions Curator

James Paulsen is a native of Albany, NY, where he currently resides. He received his BFA and MFA degrees from the University at Buffalo. He has taught in the Department of Art and Art History at the University of Rochester and the Visual Studies Department at the State University of New York, Buffalo. The themes he explores in his paintings, commodities and currency, serve as social connectors, embodying universal qualities. He creates totemic images that reveal the fetishizing nature of free-market economies. Paulsen's work has been featured in solo exhibitions at Big Orbit Gallery in Buffalo, NY; the Burchfield Nature and Art Center in West Seneca, NY; and West Side Gallery, SUNY at Brockport. Selected group shows include the Buffalo Museum of Science, Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center, and El Museo Francisco Oller y Diego Rivera in Buffalo; the Kenan Center House Gallery in Lockport, NY; and Spark Gallery in Syracuse, NY. Upcoming solo exhibitions include The Marketplace Gallery in Albany, NY; Exhibit A in Corning, NY; and the Olean Public Library Gallery in Olean, NY.



Takashi Horisaki | *Social Dress Buffalo: The Past Reflecting the Future*

Megan Michalak & Stephanie Rothenberg | *World X Diagnostics*

James Paulsen | *Transformation of the Public Sphere*

June 18 - August 7, 2010

Opening Reception
Friday, June 18, 2010 7-10 p.m.
Artist talks 7-8 p.m.

Join us **Saturday, July 3, 2010** for live audio/video feed of visitors at the opening of the **2nd Moscow International Biennale**
interacting with *World X Diagnostics* at the BAS gallery (time TBD; please visit www.buffaloartsstudio.org for details)



Buffalo Arts Studio
2495 Main Street, Suite 500
Buffalo, NY 14214
(716) 833-4450
www.buffaloartsstudio.org
Gallery hours: Tuesday - Friday 11-5; Saturday 11-3

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Major exhibit support provided by: Erie County Cultural Funding, M&T Bank, NYSCA-VAP Program, Tri-Main Development LLC, DoubleTree Club Hotel Downtown Buffalo, Hodgson Russ LLP, Phillips Lytle LLP

Catalogues provided by: Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation

Special thanks to: Buffalo ReUse, PUSH Buffalo, and our dedicated interns and volunteers

Additional support provided by: BlueCross BlueShield of WNY, Elma Press, Fund for the Arts, General Mills Foundation, HSBC Bank, Josephine Goodyear Foundation, Key Bank, NYSCA Special Arts Services and State & Local Partnerships, NYS Delegation, Ronald McDonald House Charities of WNY, Time Warner Cable, White Bicycle, and individual donors

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