

The Deconsumptionists

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Mitch McEwen

How to Buy a House in Detroit for the Woman You Love

A project of EIDIA House & Plato's Cave eidia.com/deconsumptionists

Opening reception Saturday September 7, 5-7pm, September 7 - 30, 2013 Hours 1-6pm, by appointment

EIDIA House is pleased to present **Mitch McEwen's** *How To Buy a House in Detroit for the Woman You Love*, the third solo exhibition in The Deconsumptionists Art As Archive project space. The Deconsumptionists exhibition space consists of a 48-foot semi-trailer situated in a truck-yard in Bushwick Brooklyn.

This exhibition presents the first phase of Mitch McEwen's *USA House Project*, which uses the full-scale development of a real property as a mode of research. For this project, McEwen purchased real property in the Southwest neighborhood of Detroit at auction from Wayne County for the price of \$1,100. Rather than treating the house as a physical object for formal investigation, this project considers the house as an opportunity to re-imagine the banal processes of real estate development through architectural speculation and social engagement. The first object of design is not the form and structure of the house, but the form and structure of the processes that would enable the house to be re-constituted.

Utilizing altered digital photographs, rendered architectural animations, drawings, and redacted legal documents, *How to Buy a House in Detroit for the Woman You Love* presents documentation of an ongoing process. Simultaneously personal and analytic, the works catalog contacts with local artists, investigative maps, correspondence with potential neighbors, and official correspondence with the Treasurer of Wayne County. Documentation of the house includes photos by Farrah Karapetian. All material, including the photographs, have been redacted to enable both anonymity and full transparency. The exhibition space, itself, as a modified trailer with archival content, becomes a point of reference as a spatial tactic.

As Principal of McEwen Studio and Founder of SUPERFRONT, McEwen has received international recognition for relating contemporary design methods to urban culture and social analysis. Collaborating often with artists, theorists and cultural institutions, McEwen's practice has included temporary spatial construction, portable architectures, and collective manifestos, as well as built work in adaptive re-use and urban design. As Principal of [McEwen Studio](#) and founder of SUPERFRONT, McEwen's work been profiled in [PIN-UP](#), [Architect magazine](#), and [ARTnews](#), which said of McEwen Studio: "[The] work doesn't really have a distinctive look so much as it has a feel — conceptual underpinnings rooted in wherever the site of a building, project, or installation may be."

Currently Charles Moore Visiting Assistant Professor of Urban Design at University of Michigan, McEwen holds an M.Arch from Columbia GSAPP and A.B. from Harvard in Social Studies. The Akademie Schloss Solitude granted McEwen an architecture fellowship in Stuttgart, Germany and Zagreb, Croatia for 2012-2013. Her work has also been published widely, including in the New Museum's "New City Reader" (2010), The Studio-X New York Guide to Liberating New Forms of Conversation (2010), SLUM Lab, Sustainable Living Urban Model (Fall 2011), and profiled internationally. She has taught as an Instructor at NJIT College of Architecture, Adjunct Assistant Professor at Columbia GSAPP, and lectured at Bard College, The City University of New York, and Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico, as well as served on the award jury for the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Puerto Rico. Recent projects include "Primate," a gesture recognition tool for algorithmic architectural software. (McEwen was born 1978 in Washington, DC.)

EIDIA House invites fellow artists to create exhibitions within the trailer that focus on issues such as: the environment, the sociopolitical, free speech/art censorship, production/consumption and aesthetic research.

This exhibition continues EIDIA House's exhibition initiative that evolved from the Plato's Cave (underground) series into a mobile, adaptable above ground archive and exhibition space. The Deconsumptionists trailer is conceptualized as a roaming art installation. The physicality of the trailer itself, with sleek rectangular project space offers a compelling opportunity for curators and artists to exhibit. (Note: As of 2013 The Deconsumptionists trailer is powered by a solar array covering the expanse of its roof.)

The Deconsumptionists, Art As Archive launched June 2012 in Bushwick, with its permanent installation of 171 boxes of art production, spanning three decades (each box is documented via digital photography.) EIDIA deems the trailer a recycled exhibition and events habitat, as part of the growing international "hybridized" arts spaces movement.

EIDIA is the collaborative artist team of Paul Lamarre and Melissa P. Wolf.

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[Digital image © 2013 Mitch McEwen: House USA House Project, based on photograph © 2013 Farrah Karapetian]