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HOUSTON ARTIST RAY PHILLIPS' 'IMAGINE'



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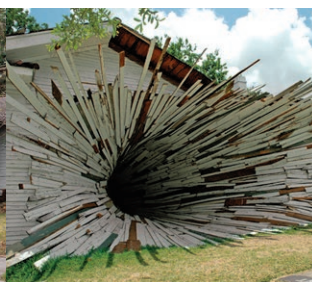
1. Ruck and Havel contemplating their next project
 2. The duo's 'Give and Take,' a centerpiece at the recent smash 'No Zoning' show at CAM
 3. Home work: the source house for 'Give and Take' and the 'Inversion' installation



2



3



On the Make

These ten visual visionaries join Ruck & Havel as artists making an impact right now. —Peter Barnes

DAWOLU JABARI ANDERSON Uses blown-up comics depicting racial caricatures to make statements about xenophobia, recently at a show at Joan Wich.

MARK FLOOD His provocative imagery—like a collage of Anderson Cooper's distorted face—prompted a *New York Times* reviewer recently to call him an "irascible eccentric."

HANA HILLEROVA Bush airport passengers will flow beneath her recently commissioned "Houston Can You Hear Me?"—24 painted aluminum stars, some eight feet across.

JOE MANCUSO Diverges from his noted landscapes to present abstract flowers worked into dreamy repetition this fall at Barbara Davis.

ED & SUZANNE BLOOM Defining the cutting edge of photography. Their March exhibit at Moody, part of Fotofest, explores the written word in carefully composed pictures of books.

JOSEPH MARIONI Canvases assault with unbroken color disintegrating into thick drips at the edges. After he shows through Jan. 5 at Wade Wilson, his protégé Joseph Cohen, 27, steps in with paintings piled with discarded latex house paint.

LIBBIE MASTERSON Snaps desolate Texas landscapes. (For more on her Dec. 3-Jan. 7 photo show, see Calendar.)

JOHN PALMER Whether his medium is salvaged wood or abstract oils, the art-world maverick and engaged citizen is carving a unique niche.

DARIO ROBLETO Finds rare stuff—Civil War artifacts, or glass formed from nuclear blasts—for pieces. Says one mag: "Sculpture's alchemical wonder boy." Now featured at Inman.

JASON VILLEGAS His fall CAM series defies description. Works range from a tower of colored fabrics to cartoonish collages of animals wearing Polos.

...CONTINUED of your car to see," Havel chuckles. "We are in Houston, right? You're not going to get somebody to park their car, walk into a gallery, and look at an installation. We were able to put it where they are."

In '09, buzz around Havel Ruck grew. Their collective received a citation from the Texas Society of Architects. Then the American Institute of Architects celebrated them with a retrospective titled *Architectural Euthanasia*, featuring large-scale photos of their oeuvre. And the Houston Contemporary Art Museum commissioned a Havel Ruck installation—the egg-shaped "Give and Take," which reconfigured the inside of a condemned Heights-area home—as a centerpiece for its smash *No Zoning* exhibit. "These projects are how I mark the significance of being here," says Ruck.

The artists followed unique paths to Houston, and, in addition to their epoch-defining collaborations, they continue to excel in their unique work here as solo artists. For his part, Havel, 50, married with a 12-year-old daughter, grew up and studied art in college in Minnesota. And he, like his big brother Joseph Havel, also a prominent artist and the director of MFA's Glassell School, made his way to Houston, after stints in Minneapolis and New York.

Havel is now completing work on a solo project for spring 2010's Fotofest involving digitally manipulated prints taken from water-damaged films he found in an abandoned adult-movie theater in the early '90s. "For

me, it's about entropy and how time acts to change an object, and how artists can influence our perception of time," he says, adding a note about how he works around many art-world norms. "I've always had a healthy rejection of the gallery world."

Meanwhile, Ruck, 47, is represented by Devin Borden Hiram Butler gallery where, in May, he completed a solo show featuring small plywood blocks carved with a torch and painted with soot. He came to Houston in 1987 as an artist-in-residence at Glassell, having grown up in Connecticut and earned degrees from schools in Colorado and Michigan. Personally, he's been in a relationship with his girlfriend for 17 years.

For 2010, Team Havel Ruck has a new, large-scale architectural intervention in mind. The Houston Arts Alliance is funding the project, tentatively titled "Twirl" and slated to be on display till 2012. The Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation owns the site and building identified for the installation. A model shows a house and undulating fence line that look as though they've been captured in a funhouse mirror. Many details have yet to be worked out, but the artists say their goal is to use timber and other objects found on-site to create a piece that reenergizes a "down and out" district and celebrate its heritage.

"It's like doing alchemy," says Havel, "where we take this discarded thing and, by looking at it a different way, we can make it into something beautiful." ■