

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

ELAINE L. JACOB GALLERY *and* COMMUNITY ARTS GALLERY

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Elaine L. Jacob Gallery

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Exhibition: *Street Sense: Celebrating 20 Years of The Heidelberg Project*
Dates: September 28 through December 14, 2007
Opening: Elaine L. Jacob Gallery, Friday, September 28, 5-8PM
Hours: Tuesdays – Thursdays 10AM-6PM and Fridays 10AM-7PM
Contact: Lisa Baylis Gonzalez or Stephany Sowards at (313) 577-0770
Symposium: Schaver Music Recital Hall, Saturday, September 29, 2-4:30PM

Wayne State University Commemorates 20 Years of The Heidelberg Project with Special Exhibition, Symposium and New Large-Scale Sculpture

The Exhibition - *Street Sense: Celebrating 20 Years of The Heidelberg Project*

Wayne State University's Elaine L. Jacob Gallery is pleased to present *Street Sense: Celebrating 20 Years of The Heidelberg Project* from September 28 through December 14, 2007. This special exhibition will document and commemorate the 20-year history of the provocative and internationally recognized neighborhood art project known as the Heidelberg Project, created by Detroit African-American artist, Tyree Guyton. Included in the show are Guyton's preliminary sketches for Heidelberg installations, historical and contemporary photographs of the project, works of art by Guyton which reflect the free-spirited energy of the Heidelberg Project, and sculptural works from the Project itself, on special temporary loan for this exhibition.

This exhibition, a symposium and related activities, and a significant portion a newly created sculpture by Tyree Guyton, are made possible by generous funding from **The Joyce Foundation**, headquartered in Chicago, Illinois. "We are thrilled to be a recipient of a Joyce Award to support Midwest cultural organizations to commission new works by artists of color. This prestigious award is a very positive reflection on the strengths of the artists in Detroit, and WSU is proud to present programs which help showcase the work of our city's artists," said Sharon Vasquez, Dean, College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts, WSU.

For 20 years, the Heidelberg Project has been an engaging presence on Detroit's east side. This signature work by artist Tyree Guyton is a symbol of hope and an object of praise, as well as a locus of controversy. Guyton has received awards from the City of Detroit and the State of Michigan; and yet, on more than one occasion, the city government has demolished large segments of the project with little advance warning. Through its tumultuous 20-year history, the Heidelberg Project has remained a thought-provoking and stimulating presence.

In 1986, responding to the deterioration and decay of a once-vibrant Detroit and his own neighborhood, artist Tyree Guyton became inspired to use art to change the world. Since then, Guyton has worked on his Heidelberg Project – a colorful and energetic environmental art project meant to transform the deteriorated neighborhood where the artist grew up into a place with an atmosphere of hope and possibility, with its brightly colored sculptures in vacant lots, and painted abandoned houses adorned with discarded objects from the inner city. Guyton's vision is centered on using art to transform an environment by stemming urban decay, displacing crime, and rebuilding the dignity and hope of a community.

Street Sense will be the first major exhibition focusing on the Heidelberg Project's 20-year history, creating a fresh opportunity to examine and interpret the many facets of Guyton's urban art, and to reconsider its ability to transform environment and encourage multicultural dialogue.

The exhibition opening event will be on Friday, September 28 from 5:00 to 8:00 PM at the Elaine L. Jacob Gallery. The event is free and open to the public.

Public Symposium

On Saturday, September 29, from 2:00 to 4:30 PM, the general public is invited to a free public symposium to hear the perspectives of scholars, community leaders, college students, and the artist about the Heidelberg Project and its implications for understanding the role of art in society. Attendees will also have an opportunity to respond, ask questions, and lend their comments.

The symposium is in the Schaver Music Recital Hall next to the Elaine L. Jacob Gallery and will be moderated by Dr. Marion Jackson, Professor of Art History, Wayne State University. Symposium panelists will include: Artist Tyree Guyton; Dr. John Beardsley, Senior Lecturer, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University; Ms. Phyllis Lovette, Principal, Ralph J. Bunche School; Dr. Mysoon Rizk, Associate Professor of Art History, University of Toledo; Ms. Jenenne Whitfield, Executive Director, The Heidelberg Project; Stephanie Lynnette Zambo and Jeffrey Gill, students, Wayne State University.

Immediately following the symposium, attendees will be given an opportunity to visit the Heidelberg Project via shuttle bus provided free of charge, and attend an hors d'oeuvres reception. At this event, the newly released book *Connecting the Dots: Tyree Guyton's Heidelberg Project*, published by Wayne State University Press, will be available for purchase.

Newly Created Outdoor Sculpture by Guyton for WSU

A major component of Wayne State University's activities to commemorate 20 years of the Heidelberg Project is the commission of a new, large-scale outdoor sculpture by artist Tyree Guyton. Through *Invisible Doors* (welded steel with enamel paint, 2007), Guyton expresses his personal commemoration of the 20-year history of the Heidelberg Project.

Guyton explains, “The concept of the sculpture is about doors of life that open and close, leading us to success or failure. The doors contain many philosophical messages; doors that we hide behind, doors that shut us out of the world, doors of liberty, extreme doors, doors of waste, doors of consumption, and doors to do a better place and time. It is designed with the hope of helping people to open the mental doors of our minds – doors that often block us from seeing new possibilities for all people.”

The new sculpture was created by Guyton with the assistance of Wayne State University and Detroit Public School students, a testament to Guyton’s strong and continuing desire to engage young people in the creative process to build a sense of community and a better world. *Invisible Doors* was fabricated by Dor Mouse, located in Detroit, Michigan.

Invisible Doors will be dedicated on September 28, 2007 at 4:00 PM in the outdoor courtyard of Wayne State University’s Welcome Center on Warren between Woodward and Cass in Detroit.

Project Support

Funding for the exhibition, symposium and related activities, as well as a significant portion of the newly created sculpture by Tyree Guyton, was generously provided by a grant from The Joyce Foundation, headquartered in Chicago, Illinois. Purchase of the newly commissioned sculpture was also made possible by support provided by Wayne State University and its College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts.

For further information, please contact Lisa Baylis Gonzalez (lbgonzalez@wayne.edu)
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