FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition: NO. TOWN beyond the wall: berlin artists in detroit
Dates: March 30 through June 22, 2012
Opening Reception: Friday, March 30, 5-8PM
Gallery Hours: Tuesdays through Thursdays 10AM to 6PM and Fridays 10AM to 7PM
(Summer Hours: Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 5PM)
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The James Pearson Duffy Department of Art and Art History's Elaine L. Jacob Gallery is pleased to present

NO.TOWN beyond the wall: berlin artists in detroit

Initiated by Wiebke Maria Wachman and Hartmut Austen
Curated by Jan-Philip Sexauer and Sebastian C. Strenger

NO.TOWN beyond the wall
Two decades after the fall of the wall - Berlin artists meet Detroit.

Detroit's creative community has long investigated the commonalities and differences between Detroit and Berlin. The most obvious commonality may be that both cities were the base of large industries that have drastically diminished or even vanished. In Detroit, the American automobile industry now shadows its former self in terms of size and influence. In Berlin, the loss of industry such as AEG is a consequence of National Socialism, war and separation.

The two cities share physical characteristics as well. The Berlin Wall was a highly protected and dangerous border that cut the city and Europe into two parts. Detroit's Eight Mile Road marks the economic divide between the impoverished city and its affluent suburbs. Both cities have been demarcated and divided with distinct populations in direct proximity while remaining separate, not only physically but psychically.

In the recent past, however, after the fall of the Iron Curtain in Europe and the election of a black President in the US, previously fixed borders have become more permeable, creating free spaces and open areas. Though welcome, this new phase is accompanied by an atmosphere of dreariness that has become the ground for new forms of cultural and social exploration by pioneers of contemporary culture.

In Berlin and Detroit, many artists have moved into abandoned industrial buildings in the search of studio spaces to create art and to start small businesses. The rich but neglected architectonic legacy is often an added incentive for new kinds of uses. For example, in the early nineties the former vault of the department store Wertheim in
Berlin became home to one of the most famous techno clubs in the world, called Tresor. The Tresor is strongly influenced by the roots of Detroit techno music.

The changes over the past twenty years have been dramatic. The selected artworks reflect the personal experiences of fifteen artists, each with an idiosyncratic perspective. Urban environments and changing cultures are presented without any attempt to generate sanitized or homogenous pictures. No. Town stimulates visual experience, thought and conversation.

The following artists are featured in the exhibition: Jonas Burgert, Uros Djurovic, Gerrit Engel, Fabian Fobbe, Philip Grözinger, Eberhard Havekost, Gregor Hildebrandt, Tilman Hornig, Michelle Jezierski, Daniel Kannenberg, Alicja Kwade, Achim Rieithmann, Peter Scior, Wiebke Maria Wachmann and Marcus Wittmers.

The James Pearson Duffy Department of Art and Art History is a division of Wayne State’s College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts, educating the next generation of visual artists, designers and art historians. Wayne State University, located in the heart of Detroit’s midtown cultural center, is a premier urban research university offering more than 350 academic programs through 13 schools and colleges to more than 31,000 students.

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