

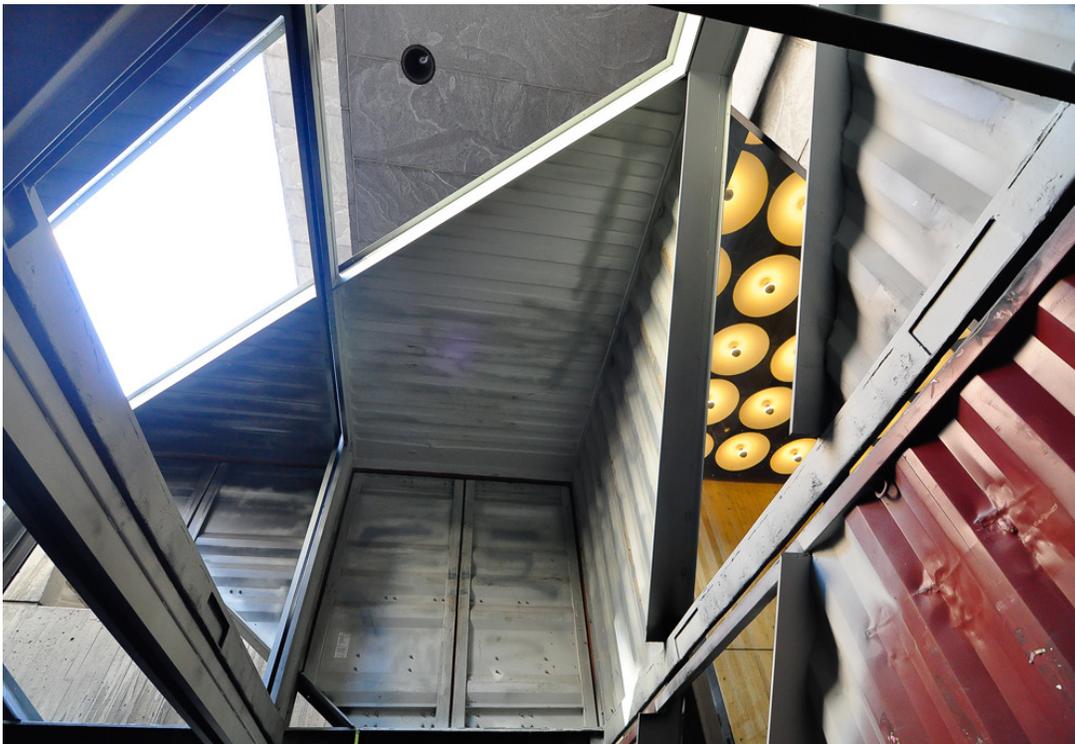
WHITNEY

Press Release

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THE WHITNEY BUILDS EDUCATION STUDIO DESIGNED BY LOT-EK



Whitney Studio under construction. Photograph by Tiffany Oelfke

NEW YORK, March 21, 2012 – The Whitney Museum of American Art has commissioned the architecture firm LOT-EK to design and build a pop-up studio for the Museum’s education programs. The structure, which will be known as the Whitney Studio, is currently being built and

is scheduled to open in April in the Sculpture Court of the Museum's Marcel Breuer building, 945 Madison Avenue at 75th Street.

The Studio will provide much-needed space for the Whitney's education programs for adults, families, NYC public school students and teachers, teens, seniors, and visitors with disabilities. Programs will include classes, studio demonstrations, and art-making workshops. With uses ranging from a formal meeting space or seminar room to a screening room or messy art studio, the structure will provide flexible space for the Whitney's signature education offerings, as well as new experimental programs. It will also function as an exhibition space to showcase work created by participants in the programs.

LOT-EK, headed by Ada Tolla and Giuseppe Lignano, has a long relationship with the Whitney, where its project *Mobile Dwelling Unit* was presented in 2004; the project architect on the Studio is Virginie Stolz. The architectural concept employs six steel shipping containers stacked on two levels to form a single volume. Visible from Madison Avenue, the 472-square foot studio is designed to fit into half of the Whitney's open Sculpture Court, on the south side of the entry bridge. A diagonal, continuous band of glass runs along two sides and across the roof of the structure, providing natural light and offering museum visitors a glimpse of activities inside. The double height space includes a triangular mezzanine and an interior designed for the production and display of art work.

Adam D. Weinberg, the Whitney's Alice Pratt Brown Director, noted: "Education is absolutely central to the Whitney's mission. This new structure allows us to carry on with our education programs while our downtown building is under construction. We are particularly pleased to be working with the wonderful creative team at LOT-EK, which is also designing Pier 57's re-development using recycled containers, in close proximity to the Whitney's new building."

"We are thrilled to work with the Whitney Museum again, especially on such an important project for the community," said LOT-EK partners Ada Tolla and Giuseppe Lignano. "Our initial intuition was to fill the moat of the Breuer Building with a monolithic black cube that

emerges on Madison Avenue, exposing the artistic energy produced by the museum's educational activities.”

Kathryn A. Potts, Associate Director and Helena Rubinstein Chair for Education at the Whitney, stated: “At the heart of all Whitney education programs is a focus on artists. Artists like LOT-EK challenge us to think differently and to consider new possibilities, such as using recycled shipping containers to make functional studio space. The Whitney Studio will enable us to experiment with new ways of integrating art making and experiential learning with our more traditional work in the galleries. Coinciding with the 2012 Biennial, this is the perfect time to give our audiences the opportunity to learn for themselves how contemporary artists think and work.”

About LOT-EK

LOT-EK is an award-winning design studio based in New York and Naples, Italy. Founded in 1993 by Ada Tolla and Giuseppe Lignano, they've been involved with commercial, institutional and residential projects globally. In addition, LOT-EK has conceived and executed exhibition design and site-specific installations for major cultural institutions and museums, including MoMA, the Whitney Museum, the Walker Art Center and the Guggenheim. LOT-EK's founding partners, Ada Tolla and Giuseppe Lignano, have Masters degrees in Architecture and Urban Design from the Università di Napoli, Italy (1989), and completed post-graduate studies at Columbia University, New York (1990-1991). Besides heading their professional practice, they also teach at Columbia University, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation in New York, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Department of Architecture, in Cambridge, MA. They also lecture at major universities and cultural institutions throughout the US and abroad. In December 2011, Ada and Giuseppe were recognized as USA Booth Fellows of Architecture & Design by United States Artists (USA).

LOT-EK has achieved high visibility in the architecture/design/art world for its sustainable and innovative approach to construction, materials and space through the adaptive reuse of existing industrial objects and systems not originally intended for architecture. LOT-EK is also recognized for the use of technology as an integral part of architecture, for addressing issues of

mobility and transformability in architecture and for blurring the boundaries between art, architecture, and entertainment. Its projects have been published in national and international publications, including *The New York Times*, *The London Times*, *International Herald Tribune*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Domus*, *Wired*, *Dwell*, *Metropolis*, *Vogue*, and others. Their first monograph, *Urbanscan*, was published by Princeton Architectural Press in 2002. *LOT-EK Mixer*, by Edizioni Press, was issued in 2000, and *MDU Mobile Dwelling Unit*, published by DAP, was printed in June 2003.

LOT-EK's sustainable approach to construction through the adaptive reuse of existing industrial objects and systems has been the basis of projects at all scales. Committed to ecologically-responsible, intelligent methods of building, LOT-EK takes advantage of the technological properties of existing industrial objects resulting from decades of expert development to create architecture. Beyond the inherent sustainability of their design methodology, LOT-EK is committed to researching and implementing innovative ways of conserving materials and energy.

Consultants to the Whitney Studio project include Andreas Scholtz, Craft Workshop LLC, Robert Silman Associates, TRS Containers, and Chris Otterbine, Orchard Group.

About Whitney Education

Focusing on the Whitney's world-renowned collection of twentieth-century and contemporary American art and its innovative exhibition program, Whitney Education makes art accessible to diverse audiences, including adults, families, NYC public school students and teachers, teens, seniors, and visitors with disabilities, through in-depth observation and discussions of art, its historical context, and critical significance. As educators, we create opportunities for visitors with different needs, experiences, and interests to make meaningful connections with the art on view. With the intrepid spirit of the artist in mind, we challenge ourselves and our audiences to think creatively, embrace new ideas, and consider American art and culture in all its complexity.

Sponsorship

Support for Education at the Whitney Museum of American Art is provided, in part, by Jack and Susan Rudin in honor of Beth Rudin DeWoody, Joanne Leonhardt Cassullo and The Dorothea L. Leonhardt Foundation, Inc., public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, Margot and Norman Freedman, the Barker Welfare Foundation, and by members of the Whitney's Education Committee.

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About the Whitney

The Whitney Museum of American Art is the world's leading museum of twentieth-century and contemporary art of the United States. Focusing particularly on works by living artists, the Whitney is celebrated for presenting important exhibitions and for its renowned collection, which comprises over 19,000 works by more than 2,900 artists. With a history of exhibiting the most promising and influential artists and provoking intense debate, the Whitney Biennial, the Museum's signature exhibition, has become the most important survey of the state of contemporary art in the United States. In addition to its landmark exhibitions, the Museum is known internationally for events and educational programs of exceptional significance and as a center for research, scholarship, and conservation.

Founded by sculptor and arts patron Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney in 1930, the Whitney was first housed on West 8th Street in Greenwich Village. The Museum relocated in 1954 to West 54th Street and, in 1966, inaugurated its present home, designed by Marcel Breuer, at 945 Madison Avenue on the Upper East Side. While its vibrant program of exhibitions and events continues uptown, the Whitney is moving forward with a new building project, designed by Renzo Piano, in downtown Manhattan. Located at the corner of Gansevoort and Washington Streets in the Meatpacking District, at the southern entrance to the High Line, the new building, which has generated immense momentum and support, will enable the Whitney to vastly increase the size and scope of its exhibition and programming space. Ground was broken on the new building in May 2011, and it is projected to open to the public in 2015.

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art

Whitney Biennial

March 1–May 27, 2012

Singular Visions

Through April 2012

Sharon Hayes

June 21–September 9, 2012

Signs & Symbols

June 28–October 28, 2012

Oskar Fischinger

June 28–October 28, 2012

Yayoi Kusama

July 12–September 30, 2012

The Whitney Museum is located at 945 Madison Avenue at 75th Street, New York City. Museum hours are: Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m., closed Monday and Tuesday. General admission: \$18. Full-time students and visitors ages 19–25 and 62 & over: \$12. Visitors 18 & under and Whitney members: FREE. Admission is pay-what-you-wish on Fridays, 6–9 p.m. For general information, please call (212) 570-3600 or visit whitney.org.

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