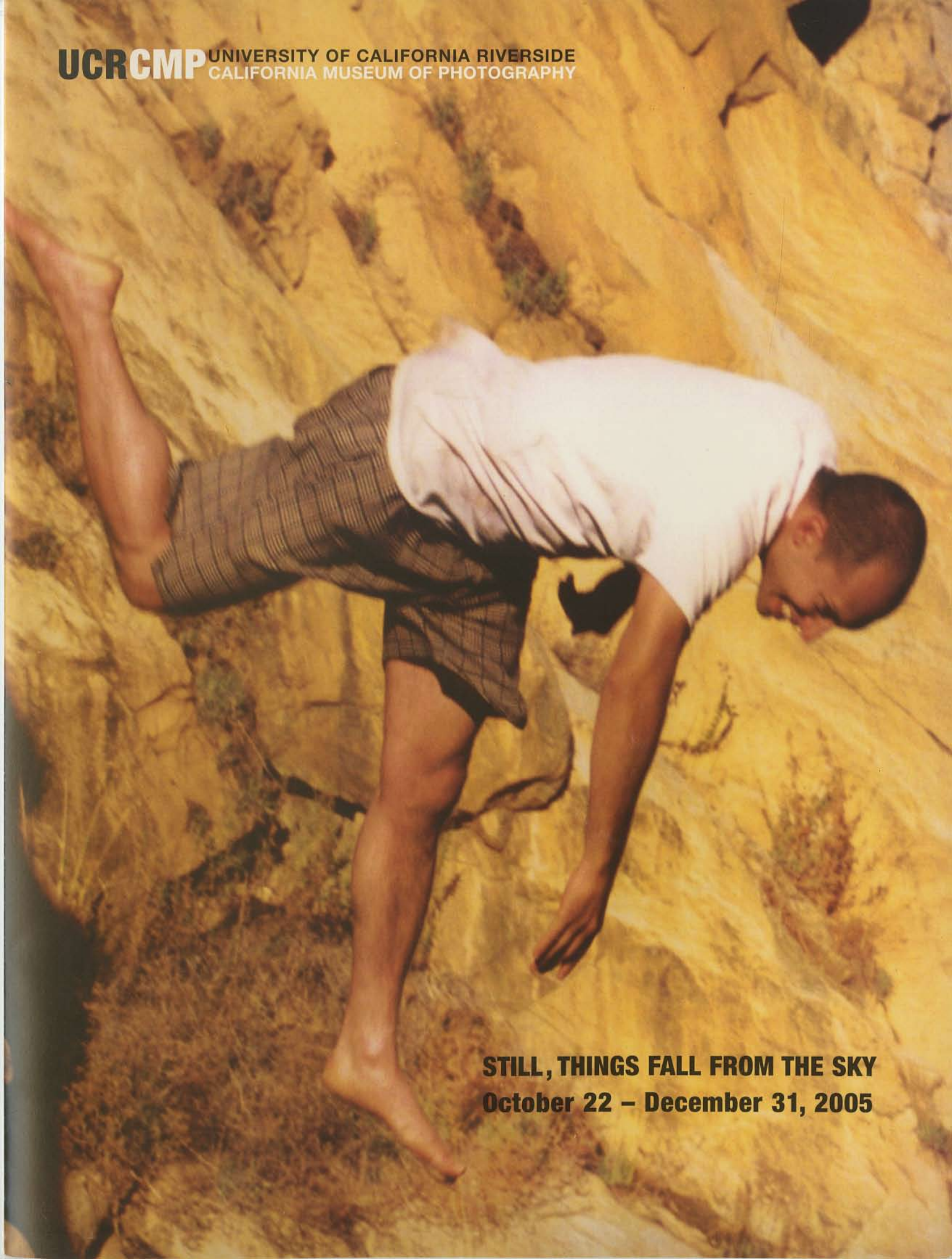


UCRCMP UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA RIVERSIDE
CALIFORNIA MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY



STILL, THINGS FALL FROM THE SKY
October 22 – December 31, 2005



BRIAN KAPERNEKAS
August 30, 2004, 2005
 60 x 60 inches
 Oil on Linen
 Courtesy of the artist

STILL, THINGS FALL FROM THE SKY

Ken Fandell

Rob Fischer

Chad Gerth

Brian Kapernekas

Janice Kerbel

Euan Macdonald

Scott Roberts

Cristián Silva

Joe Sola

Christine Tarkowski

Joel Tauber

Amir Zaki

STILL, THINGS FALL FROM THE SKY

The present is a hard place to live, often lacking magic and providing little excitement or opportunity to re-imagine the world. The desire to escape the assembly-line drudgery of daily life is instinctual. Cult membership and karaoke are some of the reactionary manifestations, but occasionally the present astonishes—amphibian rain, parallel universes, and simultaneous discovery of the same theory—creating a powerful present-tense experience and encouraging a reevaluation of who and what we are. Logically explicable, though nonetheless emotionally incomprehensible, these magical moments are so rare that more often than not we find ourselves trapped somewhere between nostalgic yearning and optimistic anticipation. It is this uncertain but fluid space that the works in **Still, Things Fall From The Sky** occupy—incorporating a swarm of ideas that blur the relationship between reality and imagined ideals, exploring the fertile terrain of myth and fable, and exposing the seductive masking of distress by beauty—as if to navigate the space between past and future in order to give the present more presence.

The relationship between reality and the ideal as explored in some of the works has much to do with the desire for immortality born of a God-like power to re-craft the world to one's own specifications. Such an impulse is not necessarily narcissistic. It is instead driven by an altruistic urge to transform and correct, to create a more desirable universe. **Janice Kerbel's** *Bird Island Project* (2000–ongoing) is one such place. Kerbel has concocted a paradisiacal island of indescribable beauty—situated above the Tropic of Cancer in the Great Bahama Bank—filled with unique bird species, original plant life, and fantastic real-estate opportunities. The jewel of the island—the green-and-blue tailed *Exuma Emerald* (2002)—is exclusively suited to its conditions. Solitary, fractious, and territorial, it hovers by batting its iridescent wings sixty-eight times per second to feed on hibiscus flowers every eight to ten minutes, making its migration from Bird Island impossible.

The Sky Above Here (Seattle, WA, May 2003) (2003) by **Ken Fandell**, is another work that confuses fact with fiction. A mural-sized image of the sky formed by collaging hundreds of digital shots of the Seattle sky into one seamless photograph to create a deliriously romantic image. The passing of time captured in the wildly diverse cloud formations and variation of hues ranging from stormy to clear, salmon to turquoise, are breathtaking and reminiscent of paintings by Albert Bierstadt and Caspar David Friedrich.



KEN FANDELL
The Sky Above Here, (Seattle, WA, May 2003), 2003
 5 x 9 feet
 Archival ink on paper
 Courtesy of the artist and Body Builder & Sportsman, Chicago

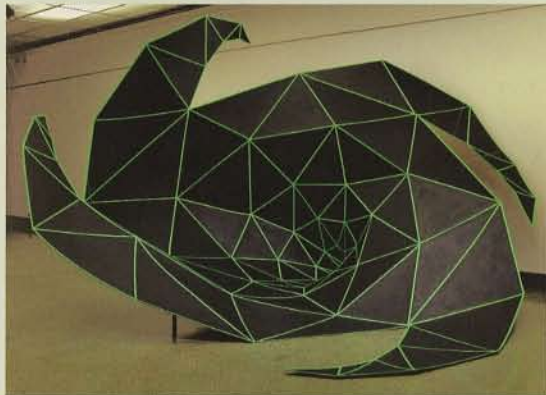


AMIR ZAKI
Untitled (OH_04 X), 2004
 Lightjet digital Type C-Print
 69.5 x 88.5 inches
 Courtesy of the artist & Perry Rubenstein Gallery, New York.

Complementing Kerbel's and Fandell's Arcadian vision is **Amir Zaki's** *Untitled (OH_04X)* (2004), a spectacular and impossible image of two Richard Neutra 'Case Study' houses teetering precariously over a Los Angeles hillside. Shot from below, the skewed perspective and digital manipulation of the photograph—removing the vertical columns and cantilevered supports needed to secure the building in place—creates a heady and unsettling image of impending doom. Conceived as utopian structures designed to revolutionize and re-define modern urban living in the 40s, 50s, and 60s, they have since become fragile, elitist dwellings that have been significantly altered to accommodate frequent earthquakes and mudslides. Their eventual demise and disintegration into the surrounding landscape is foreshadowed in **Rob Fisher's** *Accidental/Intentional* (2004/05), a series of nine photographs—individual portraits of abandoned trailers, caravans, and mobile homes in various states of dilapidation—shot from his car window in the rural Midwest. In each, a raging fire (painted directly on the photographic print) consumes the already deteriorating structure. Painting re-asserts its authority over photography by enlivening the clinical documentation with the sensuality of paint making the experience all the more palpable.



ROB FISCHER
UFO (Green and White), 2004
 Acrylic on Type C print
 20 x 30 inches
 Courtesy of Mary Goldman Gallery, Los Angeles and Cohan and Leslie, New York



SCOTT ROBERTS
Maquette for Black Hole, 2004
 Cardboard, tape
 96 x 168 x 72 inches
 Courtesy of the artist and Max Protetch Gallery, New York

Reminiscent of warp drives, worm holes, and intergalactic travel—popularized by Gene Roddenberry's progressive *Star Trek* (1966)—**Scott Roberts's** *Maquette for Black Hole* (2005) is a highly imaginative rendering of the evolutionary end-point of a massive star. It takes us on a voyage “where no man has gone before,” then “beams” us harshly back to earth through the stark materiality and makeshift nature of the object. Monumental in scale, the exhilarating and melodramatic effects of the cardboard-and-tape sculpture stun on a visceral level. A similarly powerful illusion is conjured by **Brian Kapernekas's** *Quicksand Pit* (2005)—a free standing installation evoking a swamp surrounded by cattails made entirely from tape and cardboard. *Quicksand Pit* sparks many filmic references where bit players and villains are engulfed by a living slime. The color and texture of the tape melds with the surface of the hardwood floor creating a brazen illusion despite its provisional nature. The existence of quicksand is still a contested issue belonging more to the realm of myth and fable than scientific fact.



EUAN MACDONALD
File Cabinet, 2004
 Looped video projection
 3 minutes
 Courtesy of the artist and Cohan and Leslie, New York

Suspension of disbelief is not only a required condition for viewing much of the work in **Still, Things Fall From The Sky** but in many instances a preferred one. The desire to lose oneself in an imaginary space existing outside traditional belief structures, rules, and regulations allows for a free flow of ideas unrestrained by convention. *File Cabinet* (2004), a video projection by **Euan Macdonald**, presents willful abandon in the improbable form of a small wooden cabinet. Quietly subversive, the top drawer opens to evict its filed pages. Floating upwards then falling to the floor each page a promissory note escapes its confines and with it the burden of unending obligations.



JOEL TAUBER
Searching For The Impossible: The Flying Project, 2001-2003
 Looped video projection
 32 minutes
 Courtesy of the artist & Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects

Searching For The Impossible: The Flying Project (2003), by **Joel Tauber**, takes us on an absurdist journey—the artist attempts to fly without mechanical assistance. During Tauber's thirty-two minute odyssey he leapt from cliffs flapping his arms like a bird, experimented with a hang glider, and made many failed attempts to ride in an air balloon. Finally, inspired by an 18th century drawing by Pierre Blanchard suggesting music could power flight, he ascended 150 feet into the sky while playing the bagpipes—which helped inflate a number of the forty-six helium balloons that kept him aloft. Flight of a more violent kind is apparent in **Joe Sola's** *Studio Visit* (2005), a video projection of the artist diving out his studio window, leaving his companion dumbstruck amidst the falling glass. Inspired by daydreaming during endless faculty meetings, *Studio Visit* is a release from monotony as well as a debunking of myths associated with masculinity—Sola worked with a professional stunt artist to realize this work—and a playful nod to the masochistic endurance performance strategies of the 1970s.

There is a certain perverse beauty to tragedy—a life ruined or cut short—usually accompanied by a romanticized vision of what that life once was and what it might have been. **Chad Gerth's** large-scale photographs of smashed car windshields have the same effect. In the dark and foreboding images,



CHAD GERTH
Lamishield-Combo-Flat, 2003
 C-Print on aluminum
 29 1/2 x 63 inches
 Courtesy of the artist

webs of red, yellow, and white hairline cracks move across the surface as if tracing the memory of the crash. The inevitability of death and the ephemeral nature of love is expressed in **Cristián Silva's** *Orgy* (2004), a series of seventeen miniature Lambda prints of copulating flies. A contemporary *vanitās*, expressed so economically in the life span of a fly, *Orgy* reminds one of the brevity of life and transience of earthly pleasures. Although fertile, athletic, and vigorous, flies generally symbolize putrefaction, disintegration, and decay.

The expression “a man's home is his castle” portrays home, naively, as a place of safety, refuge, and shelter regardless of its appearance. **Christine Tarkowski** critiques that notion in a series of works that explore habitat, vulnerability, and protection. *Cabin (after Theodore Kaczynski)* (2000)—a lightweight collapsible structure with wooden logs screen-printed onto the surface—is a scale replica of the Unabomber's home in the Montana wilderness. With its gnarled and worn façade and chaotic interior, Ted Kaczynski's cabin was transported to a Sacramento courtroom to be used as a peek into his unhinged mind. In Tarkowski's version there is no question of penetration, the windows and the doors are permanently locked. In *Monuments to Indestructible Living* (2004)—a series of blueprints depicting destroyed and derelict World War II bunkers—Tarkowski exposes the inevitable demise of all protective structures; the bunkers, now ruined, contradict their original function.

Fictional tropical islands, cosmic cardboard entities, and people who jump out of windows are just some of the activities in the rich and enigmatic works that make up **Still, Things Fall From The Sky**. Vast and fluid, the exhibition's diverse artistic strategies—intergalactic exploration, impossible architecture, and scientific mockumentation—combine to create an uncommon and arresting synergy. Ultimately, **Still, Things Fall From The Sky** provides a space to author new legends and reinvent the world the way one believes it should be, incorporating frailty and imperfection alongside the utopian and the ideal, to embrace revolutionary desires and capture for ourselves a moment of present-tense magic.

Ciara Ennis
 Curator of Exhibitions, UCR/CMP



CHRISTINE TARKOWSKI
Cabin (after Theodore Kaczynski), 2000
 8 x 10 x 11 feet
 Photographic screen print on nylon, aluminum frame
 Courtesy of the artist

STILL, THINGS FALL FROM THE SKY

October 22 – December 31, 2005

Opening Reception:

Saturday, October 22, 2005, 7-9 PM

SACHIGUSA YASUDA: FLYING

October 22 – December 31, 2005

Opening Reception:

Saturday, October 22, 2005, 7-9 PM

Curator's Talk

Thursday, November 3, 2005, 7 PM

Join Ciara Ennis, Curator of Exhibitions, UCR/CMP
for a tour of the exhibition:

Still, Things Fall From The Sky

Panel Discussion:

Still, Things Fall From The Sky

The Unexpected, Uncontrollable, and Unexplainable

Saturday, November 19, 2005, 2-4 PM



JOE SOLA
Studio Visit, 2005
Looped video projection
3 minutes
Courtesy of the artist

OTHER EVENTS

First Sundays:

Join Georg Burwick, Curator of Digital Media, UCR/CMP for "First Sundays," which provides high-quality, no-cost activities for families interested in having fun while enjoying historic Downtown Riverside's arts and cultural resources. All events are free and open to the public and take place the First Sunday of each month from 1-4 PM at UCR/CMP

4hrs: Photographing Downtown

October 2, 2005, 1-4 PM

A photographic project involving digital cameras and photographing downtown over a 4-hour period

Exploring Stereotypes

November 6, 2005, 1-4 PM

Using photography to explore issues of stereotyping with Native American Barbara Drake

Wheel of the Devil

December 4, 2005, 1-4 PM

Design and take home your own zoetrope strips

ONGOING Collections:

Stereotyping Native America

February 2005 – February 2006

On the Cover:

JOEL TAUBER

Searching For The Impossible: The Flying Project, 2001-2003
Looped video projection
32 minutes
Courtesy of the artist & Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects

UCR/CMP open Tuesday – Saturday 12 – 5 PM, located at 3824 Main Street, Riverside CA 92501

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