



Fred Wilson, *THE MASTER PLAN or In Between the Big Bang and Modern Art is the Restroom*, 2004-2009, detail. Twenty-two photogravures and three digital prints on Somerset white paper, each 23 x 30 inches, edition of 24. Collaborating master printer Randy Hemminghaus, Brodsky Center, Rutgers University. Photograph courtesy Brodsky Center.

On view at Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
THE MASTER PLAN or In Between the Big Bang and Modern Art is the Restroom

by American artist Fred Wilson

22 photogravures created at Brodsky Center in 2004-2009
 premiere at Zimmerli Art Museum

Excerpted from traditional collection care terminology, visitor services signage and gallery layouts from visitor orientation maps of eighteen European and North American museums of anthropology, art, cultural or natural history, *THE MASTER PLAN* by MacArthur Award winner artist Fred Wilson provides a fascinating opportunity for viewers to gain deeper awareness of the influential institutions that are entrusted with the understanding of human kind through history, culture and artifacts.

Uncovering how museums reflect society's cultural constructs through object selection, display, and interpretation has been Wilson's persistent focus. It has made his work one of contemporary art's most transformative contributions of the past three decades. In 2004 Wilson was invited to Brodsky Center to create a work, where this suite was completed in 2009. The 22 photogravures on Somerset white paper, accompanied by 3 digital prints including list of institutions, title and colophon, are in an edition of 24. Sheet size is 23 x 30 inches, while image size varies.

This is the first time *THE MASTER PLAN or In Between the Big Bang and Modern Art is the Restroom* is exhibited in its entirety.

Wilson recalls that, at the beginning of his career, "working simultaneously in the educational department of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the American Museum of Natural History, and the American Craft Museum made me wonder about how the environment in which cultural production is placed affects the way the viewer feels about the artwork and the artist who made these things."

In *THE MASTER PLAN*, the artist reuses ready-made museum orientation maps but omits all specifics except for a few areas and functions. Displayed as an immersive installation of evocative but anonymous abstract forms, viewers supply their own "master narrative" as they compare one plan or symbol usage to the next. Meaning is left open to individual experience, imagination and desire, ultimately assessing museum's organization against viewer's nonconformity.

The loss of information leaves room for assumptions, but indicators highlighted by the artist enable a clearer view. For example, familiar classifications such as "Sporting Art," which are intended to raise audience's understanding, in this context echo a deeper sense relating to the privileged life of museum founders. The subtitle *In Between the Big Bang and Modern Art is the Restroom* evokes an evolutionary perspective, the legacy of colonialism and imperialism, still embodied today in the organization of materials cared for by Western museums, supported in most cases by a hierarchically distributed space division.

A list of the museums represented in *THE MASTER PLAN* is provided and includes the American Museum of Natural History, New York, NY; Baltimore Museum of Art, MD; The Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia, PA; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; Brooklyn Museum, NY; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA; The Art Institute of Chicago, IL; Chicago History Museum, IL; Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA; Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin, Germany; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada; Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center, CT; National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; MoMA P.S. 1, Long Island City, NY; and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA.

Fred Wilson was born in 1954 in New York, where he lives and works. He received a BFA from Purchase College, SUNY, in 1976. In his 1992 groundbreaking project *Mining the Museum* Wilson re-installed sections of the collection at the Maryland Historical Society to highlight the history of slavery in America. In 1999, Wilson received a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Achievement Award. In 2003 he represented the United States at the Venice Biennale. Wilson is currently a trustee of the Whitney Museum of American Art.

VISITOR INFORMATION

ZIMMERLI ART MUSEUM | RUTGERS

Tuesday-Friday, 10 am-4:30 pm
 Saturday, Sunday, 12-5 pm
 First Tuesday of the month until 9 pm

The museum is closed Mondays and major holidays, as well as the month of August.

Admission is free.

The museum is located at 71 Hamilton Street (at George Street) on the College Avenue Campus of Rutgers University in New Brunswick. The Zimmerli is a short walk from the NJ Transit train station in New Brunswick, midway between New York City and Philadelphia.

PaparazZi Café is open Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Friday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., with a variety of breakfast, lunch, and snack items. The café is closed weekends and major holidays, as well as the months of July and August.

For more information, visit the museum's website www.zimmerlimuseum.rutgers.edu or call 848-932-7237.

About the BRODSKY CENTER | RUTGERS

The Brodsky Center is dedicated to the promotion of the printed image as central to contemporary art practice. Founded in 1986 by printmaker and professor Judy Brodsky, it invites established and emerging artists to create new work in paper and print with the support of its master printers and papermakers.

Diversity and education are central to the Brodsky Center's mission. High school to postgraduate students are exposed to current art processes and ideas through classes, lectures, internships, school visits and regular exhibitions.

Housed at Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, a research institution, innovation is integral to the Brodsky Center's mission. To this date, over 300 artists have worked at Brodsky Center. Its state-of-the-art facilities are equipped to produce work in all print media. Editions produced by the Brodsky Center are included in the collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Baltimore Museum of Art; Victoria & Albert Museum, London; Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris; and Australian National Gallery, Canberra, among other institutions.

Brodsky Center's operations and programs are funded in part by Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; income from the New Jersey State Council of the Arts; and donors to the Brodsky Center.



About the ZIMMERLI ART MUSEUM | RUTGERS

The Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum houses more than 60,000 works of art, ranging from ancient to contemporary art. The permanent collection features particularly rich holdings in 19th-century French art; Russian art from icons to the avant-garde; Soviet nonconformist art from the Dodge Collection; and American art with notable holdings of prints. In addition, small groups of antiquities, old master paintings, as well as art inspired by Japan and original illustrations for children's books, provide representative examples of the museum's research and teaching message at Rutgers. One of the largest and most distinguished university-based art museums in the nation, the Zimmerli is located on the New Brunswick campus of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. Established in 1766, Rutgers is America's eighth oldest institution of higher learning and a premier public research university.

The Zimmerli's operations, exhibitions, and programs are funded in part by Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, and income from the Avenir Foundation Endowment and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Endowment, among others. Additional support comes from the New Jersey State Council of the Arts and the Estate of Victoria J. Mastrobuono; and donors, members, and friends of the museum.

Please contact us to purchase or with any questions at
info@brodskycenter.org or by phone at 848-932-5246.
 Visit our website at www.brodskycenter.org.