

GRAHAM FOUNDATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Las Vegas Studio: Images from the Archives of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown will be on view at the Graham Foundation from Thursday, October 28, 2010 through February 19, 2011.



The Strip seen from the desert with Denise Scott Brown in the foreground, 1966
Photograph: Robert Venturi © Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates, Inc., Philadelphia

Chicago, IL, October 26, 2010 – The Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts is pleased to announce the opening of its next exhibition, *Las Vegas Studio: Images from the Archives of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown*. On view from October 28, 2010 through February 19, 2011, the exhibition presents original photographs and films produced in 1968 by American architects Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, with students from Yale University, as part of a groundbreaking investigation of the Las Vegas Strip.

For Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour photography and film were both the means of argumentation and representation of their research. Their approach used photographic methods borrowed from the disciplines of anthropology, sociology, and art and as a research methodology became as revolutionary as their findings, which were published in the legendary 1972 book, *Learning from Las Vegas*. Offering great insight into the creation of this groundbreaking publication, the exhibition, *Las Vegas Studio: Images from the Archives of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown*, curated by Hilar Stadler and Martino Stierli in collaboration with artist Peter Fischli, presents original research materials from the archives of Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates, Inc. According to the curators, “The selection of images focuses largely on secondary aspects and side products of the research project. It thereby shifts to the forefront previously unknown photographs that settled on the fringes of the Las Vegas research.”

Venturi and Scott Brown’s fresh way of looking at the city—the influence of popular culture, advertising, film, and the experience of the built environment from a moving automobile—extended the categories of the ordinary, the ugly, and the social into architecture. “Their approach to looking at and thinking about the city was unprecedented. Their formulation of architectural research remains vital and influential to generations of architects,” says Graham Foundation Director and Curator Sarah Herda.

The Chicago presentation of *Las Vegas Studio: Images from the Archives of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown*, organized by Graham Foundation Director and Curator Sarah Herda, follows presentations at the Museum im Bellpark, Kriens, Switzerland; Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt, Germany; Yale School of Architecture, New Haven, CT; and The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA).

Las Vegas Studio: Images from the Archives of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown is organized by the Museum im Bellpark, Kriens.

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

The exhibition *Las Vegas Studio: Images from the Archives of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown* is accompanied by a fully illustrated exhibition catalogue. Published by Verlag Scheidegger & Spiess and edited by Hilar Stadler and Martino Stierli in collaboration with Peter Fischli, the publication includes texts by Stanislaus von Moos and Martino Stierli as well as an interview by Hans Ulrich Obrist with Peter Fischli and Rem Koolhaas.

The Graham Foundation will sell the exhibition catalogue along with other select titles in its library throughout the exhibition.

RELATED EVENTS

Opening Reception with Curators Martino Stierli and Hilar Stadler
OCT 28, 2010, 6PM

For more information and to RSVP, visit:

http://www.grahamfoundation.org/public_events/3885-opening-reception-las-vegas-studio

Las Vegas, Film, and the Mobilized Gaze

MARTINO STIERLI

NOV 1, 2010, 6PM

TALK

Space is limited. Reservations are required.

For more information and to RSVP, visit:

http://www.grahamfoundation.org/public_events/3886-las-vegas-film-and-the-mobilized-gaze

Accessibility: Talks are held in the ballroom on the third floor which is only accessible by stairs. The first floor of the Madlener House is accessible via an outdoor lift. Please call 312.787.4071 to make arrangements.

CONTRIBUTORS

Hilar Stadler was born in Lucerne, Switzerland in 1963, where he lives and works. Stadler studied Art History and Cinema Studies at the University of Zurich. He is the Director of the Museum im Bellpark, Kriens, Switzerland, as well as a freelance curator and writer in art, architecture, and photography.

Martino Stierli was born in 1974 in Zug, Switzerland. He is an art historian focusing on modern art and architecture. Stierli studied at the University of Zurich and holds a Ph.D. from ETH Zurich. He is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the NCCR "Iconic Criticism" (eikones) at the University of Basel working on a project on collage in architecture.

Peter Fischli was born in Zurich, Switzerland in 1952, where he lives and works. He studied at the Academie di Belle Arti of Urbino and Bologna. Since 1979, he has been collaborating with artist David Weiss. Together, they form the internationally renowned artist duo Fischli/Weiss.

ROBERT VENTURI AND DENISE SCOTT BROWN

He's one of the world's most famous and influential architects and a writer, teacher, artist, and philosopher. She's an architect, planner, author and educator who has been called the world's foremost female architect.

Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi have been significantly responsible for redirecting the mainstream of Modern architecture since the mid 1960s and they continue their intellectual travel through lecturing and writing. In 2004, they published *Architecture as Signs and Systems for a Mannerist Time*. This survey of their work's evolution explores its theoretical underpinnings after 45 years of practice. In 2009, Scott Brown published *Having Words*, a collection of essays ranging from 1967's witty but combative "Planning the Powder Room," and a thoughtful approach to what New Orleans should do.

Their body of architecture and planning includes the Vanna Venturi house, perhaps the smallest building ever to rock the architectural world; the Guild House apartments (which dared to be ordinary when to astonish was *de rigueur*); the Sainsbury Wing of London's National Gallery; a provincial capitol building in Toulouse, France; the Life Sciences complex at the University of Michigan; advocacy planning for Philadelphia's South Street community; the Perelman Quadrangle campus center precinct at the University of Pennsylvania; and the Mielparque hotel and spa in Japan's Nikko Kirifuri national forest.

Current projects include a building for the Curtis Institute of Music and an extension to the Woodmere Art Museum, both in Philadelphia, PA. Their work was featured in an exhibition at Yale University titled *What We Learned: The Yale Las Vegas Studio and the Work of Venturi Scott Brown & Associates*.

RELATED PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE GRAHAM FOUNDATION

In 1962, under the directorship of John Entenza, Robert Venturi became one of the earliest fellows in the Graham Foundation's grant program. The research that was produced during Venturi's fellowship formed the cornerstone of his first book, *Complexity and Contradiction*, which was co-published by the Graham Foundation and the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in 1964.

Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour's *Learning from Las Vegas* has had a major influence on other significant works supported by grants from the Graham Foundation, including Rem Koolhaas's 1978 book *Delirious New York*.

More recently, the foundation has supported a forthcoming documentary film by James Venturi about the ideas and work of his parents, Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown; and Matthew Borysevich's *Learning From Hangzhou*, which was identified as one of the most notable books published in 2009 by New York Times Architecture Critic Nicolai Ouroussoff.

ABOUT THE GRAHAM FOUNDATION

Founded in 1956, the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts makes project-based grants to individuals and organizations and produces public programs to foster the development and exchange of diverse and challenging ideas about architecture and its role in

the arts, culture, and society. The Graham Foundation was created by a bequest from Ernest R. Graham (1866–1936), a prominent Chicago architect who was a protégé of Daniel Burnham.

Since 1963, the Graham Foundation has been located in the Madlener House, a 9,000-square foot turn of the century Prairie-style mansion by architect Richard E. Schmidt and designer Hugh M. G. Garden, located in the historic Gold Coast neighborhood of Chicago. In 2007, under the direction of Sarah Herda, the Graham Foundation launched an expanded exhibition program, reconceiving the use of the historic mansion to showcase contemporary work and issues in the world of architecture. *Las Vegas Studio* is the fifth exhibition in this new program that has included the group show *Actions: What You Can Do With the City* and the work of Bjarke Ingels (Copenhagen), Cecil Balmond (London), and Felipe Dulzaides (Cuba).

EXHIBITION LOCATION & HOURS

Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts
Madlener House
4 West Burton Place
Chicago, IL 60610
www.grahamfoundation.org

Gallery Hours: Wednesday to Saturday, 11AM to 5PM; every third Thursday of the month, 11AM to 8PM. Group tours available.

Accessibility: The first floor of the Madlener House is accessible via an outdoor lift. Please call 312.787.4071 to make arrangements.

Admission: Free

For more information: 312.787.4071 / info@grahamfoundation.org

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High-resolution digital images and publication excerpts are available online; email Sarah Rogers at srogers@grahamfoundation.org for login information. Press tours available by appointment. Contact Sarah Rogers for additional information.

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