OAKLAND, CA—Sixteen artists reconsider modern architecture and what it represents to a new generation in *Painting the Glass House: Artists Revisit Modern Architecture* curated by Jessica Hough and Mónica Ramírez-Montagut on view at the Mills College Art Museum from January 21 through March 22, 2009. A public reception will be held on January 21 from 5:30–7:30pm with a walk-through with the curators at 6:00pm.

Modern architecture is often identified with buildings by Le Corbusier, Philip Johnson, Mies van der Rohe, and Frank Lloyd Wright, which represent a period driven by developments in technology, engineering, and the introduction of industrial materials such as iron, steel, concrete, and glass. However, architects at this time engaged in a practice that not only incorporated structural innovations, but also encouraged social change.

The artists featured in the exhibition are interested not only in the potential of utopian ideas that these buildings represent, but also the sense of a passing idealism and lost opportunity that modern architecture now embodies. Hough comments, “The artists are less interested in the built structures themselves and what it might feel like to be inside one, and more interested in the philosophy and idealism they represent. The way in which the buildings signal a possibility of utopia is essential—a future that could have been. Sentimentality runs through much of the work.”

Ramírez-Montagut adds, “This melancholic remembrance comes at a time when great works of modern architecture are at risk due to neglect, deterioration, and demolition. Underlying all the artworks is a feeling of deep admiration for the architects who sought to elevate culture and bring it to the broad masses, yet their sense of failure is also prevalent; the artists’ knowledge of modern architecture’s crisis and demise tints their works with nostalgia.”

*Painting the Glass House: Artists Revisit Modern Architecture* brings together two-dimensional works of various media (including video) that explore an interest among emerging artists in architecture of the modern period. The exhibition includes work by Alexander Apóstol, Daniel
Arsham, Gordon Cheung, David Claerbout, Angela Dufresne, Mark Dzewulski, Christine Erhard, Cyprien Gaillard, Terence Gower, Angelina Gualdoni, Natasha Kissell, Luisa Lambri, Dorit Margreiter, Russell Nachman, Enoc Perez, and Lucy Williams.


*Painting the Glass House: Artists Revisit Modern Architecture* has been organized by The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum and has been supported by the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, the LEF Foundation, the Joan Danforth Art Museum Endowment, and the Agnes Cowles Bourne Fund for Special Exhibitions.

Jessica Hough is the former director of the Mills College Art Museum where she curated *Don't Let the Boys Win: Kinke Kooi, Carrie Moyer, and Lara Schnitger*. Hough was previously curatorial director at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, where she organized exhibitions including *Glee: Painting Now; Into My World: Recent British Sculpture; Karkhana: A Contemporary Collaboration*; and *Alyson Shotz: Light, Sound, Space*. Hough is currently the director of exhibitions, publications, and programs at The Hammer Museum at UCLA. She earned her Master’s from the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College.

Mónica Ramírez-Montagut is curator at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum. Ramírez-Montagut was previously assistant curator of Architecture and Design at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in NY. There she co-curated *Zaha Hadid* (2006), which received the second place award for Best Architecture or Design Show from the AICA; curated *Restoring a Masterpiece: Frank Lloyd Wright’s Guggenheim Museum* (2007); and was part of the curatorial team working on the retrospective of Chinese artist Cai Guo-Qiang (2008). Her curatorial interests focus on the blurring of boundaries between art, architecture, and design; young emerging Latino artists; and installations. She is an architect, with a Master’s degree in Art and Architecture and Ph.D. in Theory and History of Architecture.

**Public Programs:**

**Sunday, February 1, 3:00pm, Danforth Lecture Hall, Art Building**  
*Aaron Betsky, Blob Utopia: Digital Destiny or Aesthetic Escape?*  
For centuries, architects have promised to build us a better world. In their visions, new technologies ironically bring us closer to a return to nature without artificial forms. Is this really our destiny, or is it just one more mirage? Betsky is the director of the Cincinnati Art Museum and was the artistic director of the 11th International Architecture Biennale in Venice in 2008.  
*Presented by the Technology and Society Lecture Series at Mills College.*

**Wednesday, February 25, 7:30pm, Danforth Lecture Hall, Art Building**  
*Angela Dufresne, Imitation of Life, or why Queen Jane Should be Approximately*  
In her paintings, New York-based Angela Dufresne irreverently concocts imaginary communities that satisfy her vision for the world. She describes her paintings, which bring together disparate sources from film, music, architecture, and the history of painting, as “mashups” or hybrids.
The Mills College Art Museum, founded in 1925, is a dynamic center for art that focuses on the creative work of women as artists and curators. The Museum strives to engage and inspire the diverse and distinctive cultures of the Bay Area by presenting innovative exhibitions by emerging and established national and international artists. Exhibitions are designed to challenge and invite reflection upon the profound complexities of contemporary culture.

Mills College Art Museum
5000 MacArthur Boulevard
Oakland, CA 94613
www.mills.edu/museum

Museum Hours:
Tuesday-Sunday 11-4pm
Wednesday 11-7:30pm
Monday closed
Admission is free