



Tchoban Foundation
Museum for
Architectural Drawing

Press release

Berlin, 04.11.2020

James Wines and SITE: Retrospective 1970–2020

Tchoban Foundation. Museum for Architectural Drawing, Berlin
Christinenstrasse 18a, 10119 Berlin

Exhibition duration: 28 November 2020–7 March 2021

Opening hours: Mon–Fri: 2–7 pm, Sat–Sun: 1–5 pm

Admission: €5; reduced: €3

Individual press tour on request:

Please contact us at newsletter@tchoban-foundation.de

Sustainability, climate change, global warming, ecological awareness, energy-saving construction, green architecture . . . These terms are ubiquitous in our vocabulary today, reflecting the urgency of current challenges, including those confronting urban life. Fifty years ago, it was certainly different – particularly in the United States, a country that, due to its size, continues to depend on well-functioning infrastructure and industries such as car manufacturing, while facing multiple tasks, from resolving the problem of population density and avoiding the formation of ghettos to creating pleasant, green urban environments. In the USA, James Wines and his firm SITE were pioneers in the conception of sustainable, ‘green’ solutions to counter increasing pollution, overpopulation and urban density.

The architectural firm SITE (Sculpture in the Environment), which is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary this year and to which this retrospective is dedicated, was founded by the artist



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and architect James Wines. SITE is more than just a pioneer in green design, especially considering that the idea of embedding architecture in the environment is hardly new. SITE's work is unique for many more reasons. One is the high level of artistic skill manifest in Wines's drawings, which reveal a steady, practiced and trained hand. Wines originally comes from the arts and studied sculpture along with literature and art history. This shines through in his designs – many projects, especially his series for the BEST stores, look like objects of art, like installations, sculptures or art in public space. Wines has repeatedly emphasised the role that manual design plays for him, arguing that the human brain is much more complex than any computer programme. Computers use algorithms; human beings use imagination. The second guiding theme concerns the embedding of architecture in context. This can be traced wonderfully in the drawings – for example, in the work on the Four Corners Monument or the BEST branch store in Florida, with its tropical rainforest planted behind a glass façade alluding to the locality. But SITE is also about innovation, visions for the future of our densely populated cities, for how we want to combine nature and urban environment. One possibility is the Highrise of Homes developed by Wines and often copied by others: a high-rise building that, whatever the number of storeys, takes the human scale into account by accommodating on each floor a kind of detached house with a garden or a farm for the residents.

The work of SITE is inextricably linked with the personality of its founder, whose critical view of social developments can also be seen in some of the works in the exhibition, such as the picture of the Egyptian sarcophagus adorned with various trademarks of junk culture and consumer society. What is our message to future generations, what will remain once we are gone, what is sustainable, what endures? What cultural monuments from our time will future archaeologists excavate?

A catalogue will be published to accompany the exhibition.

The curator of the exhibition is Nadejda Bartels, the director of Tchoban Foundation, in close cooperation with the artist.



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James Wines (b. 1932)

James Wines is an architectural designer, visual artist and writer. He is also a professor of architecture at Penn State University, with a teaching emphasis on integrative arts. Educated at Syracuse University, he is the founder (in 1970) of SITE New York, a multi-disciplinary practice that includes buildings, public spaces, master plans, landscapes, environmental art works, interiors, exhibition designs, video productions, graphics and product designs. The main focus of his work is on aesthetic, sociological and environmental concerns in the building arts. As SITE's continuing President and Creative Director, he has designed and built more than one hundred and fifty art/architectural projects in the USA, Italy, France, England, Austria, Canada, Spain, Qatar, Turkey, Dubai, China and Japan. He has delivered lectures at eight hundred colleges, universities and professional conferences in fifty-seven countries and written seven books, including *De-Architecture* (Rizzoli International, 1987) and *Green Architecture* (Taschen Verlag, 2000). In addition, his drawings and projects for SITE have been the subject of twenty-two monographs and museum catalogues. Winner of twenty-five art and design awards, including the 1995 Chrysler Award for Design Innovation (USA) and the 2011 ANCE Award for an International Architect (Italy), he was honored in 2002 with a large retrospective exhibition at the Frac Centre in Orléans, France, jointly sponsored by Centre Pompidou in Paris and the Musée des Beaux-Arts d'Orléans. His graphic work has been shown in more than one hundred and fifty museums and galleries in the USA, Europe and Asia. The most recent exhibition of his drawings, bridging the time from 1970 to the present, was on view during the winter of 2013 at the Atrium Gallery, City College of New York. Drawings and models can be found in numerous public and private collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Whitney Museum, Centre Pompidou, Louvre, Victoria and Albert Museum, Australian National Gallery, Tokyo National Gallery and Art Institute of Chicago. He lives and works in New York.



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The Tchoban Foundation was founded in 2009 by Sergei Tchoban, a passionate draftsman and collector of architectural drawings. Comprising a considerable collection and an extensive reference library, it offers experts and interested visitors the opportunity to conduct research on the history and nature of architectural draughtsmanship. Through its exhibitions, the Foundation aims to familiarise broad audiences in the digital age with the fascinating and emotionally charged worlds of architectural drawing.

Contact

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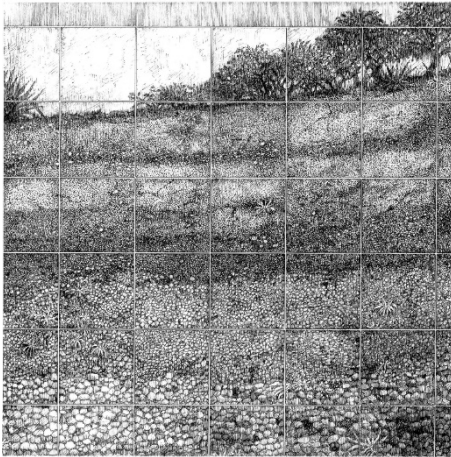
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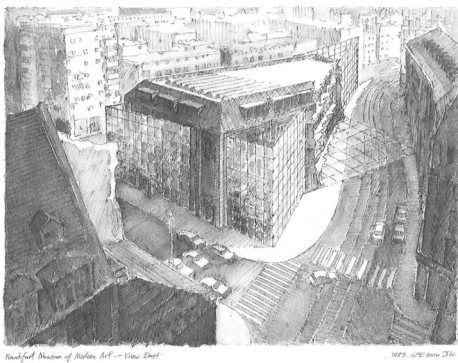


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Illustrations



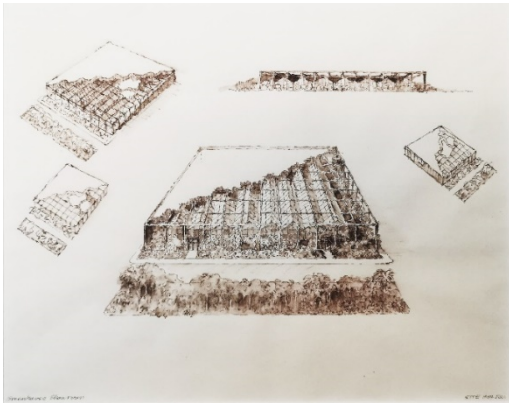
Best Terrarium Showroom, Hialeah, Florida
1979
Pen and ink on paper
49,53 x 49,53 cm
© James Wines
Courtesy: Yvonne Lyu



Frankfurt Museum of Modern Art – View East
1983
Pen and ink wash on paper
20,32 x 25,4 cm



© James Wines



Greenhouse Showroom

1984

Ink and sepia wash

27,94 x 35,56 cm

© James Wines



World Ecology Pavilion – Expo '92

1990

Watercolour on paper

38,10 x 60,96 cm

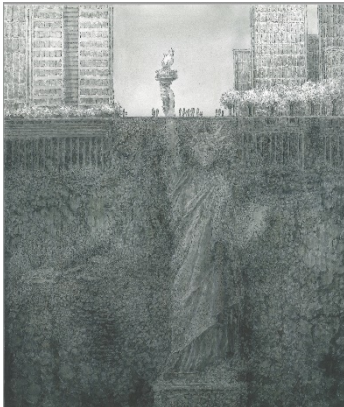
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Residence Antilia-Mumbai
2004
Watercolour on paper
41,91 x 26,67 cm
© James Wines
By courtesy of Malcolm Knapp



Liberty Landfill Plaza
2016
Pen and ink wash on paper
60,96 x 45,72 cm
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