

December 2010  
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# MoCP

Museum of  
**Contemporary Photography**

COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO  
600 S Michigan Ave  
Chicago IL 60605  
Phone 312.663.5554 Fax 312.369.8067  
[mocp@colum.edu](mailto:mocp@colum.edu) [mocp.org](http://mocp.org)

**Guy Tillim: *Avenue Patrice Lumumba*  
January 10 - March 6, 2011**

**Also on view: Kahn & Selesnick  
January 14 - April 3, 2011**

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Chicago – The Museum of Contemporary Photography, Columbia College Chicago is proud to present two new exhibitions opening in January 2011: *Guy Tillim: Avenue Patrice Lumumba* and *Kahn & Selesnick*.

In many African cities, there are streets, avenues and squares named after Patrice Lumumba, one of the first elected African leaders of modern times, who won the Congo election after independence from Belgium in 1960. His speech at the independence celebrations in Léopoldville, in the presence of the Belgian King Baudouin unequivocally signaled his opposition to the West's idea of neo-colonial order that would replace overt domination with indirect control. He was assassinated in January 1961 by Belgian agents after UN complicity in the secession of the provinces of Katanga and South Kasai, and a Western power-supported military coup led by Mobutu Sese Seko. Today his image as a nationalist visionary necessarily remains unmolested by the accusations of abuse of power that became synonymous with later African heads of state.

*Avenue Patrice Lumumba* by Guy Tillim is an examination of modern history in Africa against the backdrop of its colonial and post-colonial architectural heritage. It travels through numerous African countries, including Mozambique, Angola and The Democratic Republic of Congo.

In this project, the South African photographer Guy Tillim departs from the late-modernist architectural structures that shaped the colonial landscape of conflicts in recent decades. However, the transitional and hybrid scenery and spaces he depicts do not merely testify to conflict and an oppressive past, decay and violently contested ideologies. They speak equally of the aspirations for liberation and progress in the post-colonial era.



**Kahn & Selesnick: *The Apollo Prophecies* and *Mars: Adrift on the Hourglass Sea***  
**January 14 - April 3, 2011**

Known for creating whimsical and elaborately constructed photographs, drawings, and sculptures, Nicholas Kahn (American, b. 1964) and Richard Selesnick (American, b. 1964) have been spinning wild visual tales together for more than twenty years. Their practice involves dreaming up complex fictional narratives based on real historical events and injecting them with a wry sense of humor. Their *Apollo Prophecies* (2004) project, for example, is based on a reinterpretation of the first world event of historical significance that the two men remember clearly. Both born in 1964, they were five years old when they watched the first American spaceship land on the moon. In their version of the moon landing, the 1960s astronauts arrive on the moon only to discover that someone has beat them there, in this case Edwardian dandies who arrived circa 1905. The series is a compelling mix of elements drawn from historical and science-fictional accounts of the moon landing, dating both before and after it occurred, and those that Kahn and Selesnick simply dream up.

Kahn & Selesnick's most recent project, *Mars: Adrift on the Hourglass Sea* (2010), features two female protagonists wandering aimlessly in a bizarre Martian landscape. Like in the Apollo project, someone has been there before them, and they encounter detritus from the mysteriously vacated civilization including pyramids, obelisks, giant balloons, and concrete boats. Comprising photographs taken by NASA's Mars rovers and by the artists themselves in the Nevada and Utah deserts, these landscapes have a dreamlike quality. Their extensive research and weaving together of both historical fact and pop culture interpretations, combined with their extreme playfulness is what makes their work distinctive in the field of contemporary art.

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**ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

**Guy Tillim** was born in Johannesburg in 1962. He started photographing professionally in 1986 and joined Afrapix, a collective of South African photographers with whom he worked closely until 1990. His work as a freelance photographer in South Africa for the local and foreign media included positions with Reuters between 1986 and 1988, and Agence France Presse in 1993 and 1994. Tillim has received many awards for his work including the Prix SCAM (Societe Civile des Auteurs Multimedia) Roger Pic in 2002, the Higashikawa Overseas Photographer Award (Japan) in 2003, the 2004 DaimlerChrysler Award for South

African photography, the Leica Oskar Barnack Award in 2005 and the first Robert Gardner Fellowship in Photography from the Peabody Museum at Harvard University in 2006. He has exhibited extensively around the globe.

**Richard Selesnick and Nicholas Kahn** have been collaborating as Kahn/Selesnick since 1988 on a series of complex narrative photo-novellas and sculptural installations. Their work has evolved into a series of projects involving fictional attributions, narratives, and sculpture. Kahn & Selesnick have held artist residencies at Addison Gallery of American Art in Massachusetts, the Djerrasi Artist Program in California, and Toni Morrison's Atelier Program at Princeton University. Their solo exhibitions include *Schottensumpfkunftig*, *The REC*, *Past-Future*, *Scotlandfuturebog*, *City of Salt*, *The Apollo Prophecies*, *Eisbergfreistadt*, and more. The two artists met at the Washington University in St. Louis where both studied photography; they each currently reside in New York.

#### **MoCP SPONSORS**

The exhibitions, presentations, and related programs of the MoCP are sponsored in part by After School Matters; the Terra Foundation for American Art; the Lannan Foundation; the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; the National Endowment for the Arts; the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Arts; the Mayer and Morris Kaplan Family Foundation; The Kristyna M. Driehaus Foundation; U.S. Bank; American Airlines, the official airline of the MoCP; and our members.

#### **ABOUT MOCP**

The Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP), a resident organization of Columbia College Chicago, is the only museum in the Midwest with an exclusive commitment to the medium of photography. By presenting projects and exhibitions that embrace a wide range of contemporary aesthetics and technologies, the MoCP strives to communicate the value and significance of photographic images as expressions of human thought, imagination, and creativity.

#### **PRESS CONTACTS**

Audrey Michelle Mast  
Web/PR/Marketing Administrator  
Museum of Contemporary Photography  
600 S. Michigan Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60605  
P: 773.459.5777  
F: 312.344.8067  
[audrey.m.mast@gmail.com](mailto:audrey.m.mast@gmail.com)

Jeffrey Arnett  
Manager of Development and Marketing  
Museum of Contemporary Photography  
600 S. Michigan Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60605  
P: 312.344.7779  
F: 312.344-8067  
[jarnett@colum.edu](mailto:jarnett@colum.edu)

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#### **IMAGES:**

Guy Tillim  
*Typists, Likasi, DR Congo, 2007*  
Ink jet print  
36 x 51 1/2 inches  
Courtesy Kuckei + Kuckei, Berlin

Kahn & Selesnick  
*Janus/Symbiosis, 2010*  
10 x 10 inches  
Ink jet print  
Courtesy Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago and Yancey Richardson Gallery, New York