

Texas A&M, College of Architecture
Artist in Residence, Spring 2010

Samuel Yates

January 19 - May 03

New Genre Sculpture: Building Social Objects

In this course, we will explore New Media Theory, Locative Media Theory, Relational Aesthetics, and other expanded notions of art and architecture through the creation of several new, large-scale art objects and plans for art objects.

These objects may include painting, sculpture, photography, performance, installation, software, and architecture made for gallery, museum and street contexts, as well as print publication. In each of them, we will focus on the inter-human relations these projects represent, produce or prompt (that is, their relational aesthetics, etc.).

Two examples of possible projects the class may pursue include: 1) building a non-toxic, zero-VOC *paint company* (paint palette, paint can, paint label, paint chip, paint store, etc.) to produce an endless number of “paintings” made by other people; and 2) a *portable library* for the longest novel in the English language (written in 22,339 volumes; totaling 2.14 million pages; using 1.07 trillion words; occupying over 581 ft., or almost 2 football fields, of shelf space).

These and other projects involve research (online and site visits), databases, GIS and GPS mapping, urban planning law (including loopholes), digital fabrication, and video production; they also involve issues of authorship, citizenship (physical and virtual), government, political structure and influence, game design, UI design, and public art.

In the first week, we will review current projects, brainstorm new projects, and assess student interest in pursuing each. Ideally, we will match student skills, interest, and experience with the projects they want to build. We will split into three or four groups to pursue different projects simultaneously over the semester, with each group reporting back to the class to lead discussion, production, and further brainstorming. We may also work with senior engineers and user interface designers at Adobe, Google, and Microsoft to complete key stages of certain projects.

About the Artist

Samuel Yates received a BA from UC Berkeley and an MFA from Columbia University in 2002. His work is in collections ranging from the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in California to the Ballett Frankfurt in Germany. He lives and works in Southern California and is currently preparing for solo exhibitions in Los Angeles and New York.

About the file cabinet image:

UNTITLED (Minuet in MG), 1999–, mixed media, 15 in. x 26 in. x 65 ft.
The seven-story tall sculpture, *Untitled (Minuet in MG)*, contains a 1974 MG Midget sportscar that was donated, shredded, steamrolled, photographed, bagged, labeled, numbered, and filed by weight from heaviest to lightest in milligrams (mgs)—an MG in mgs. The sculpture now holds the Guinness World Record for the “tallest file cabinet on earth,” and the DMV registration for the shredded car filed inside the cabinet officially indicates possession by its owner.

