



New Orleans Museum of Art

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Emergency Response Studio at NOMA through Dec. 14

Former FEMA-like trailer now a livable, sustainable artist's studio

[Hi-res images available upon request.]

NEW ORLEANS, La. (Monday, December 1, 2008)—For three weeks only—from Wednesday, November 26 to Sunday, December 14—artist Paul Villinski's *Emergency Response Studio* will be open to the public outside of the New Orleans Museum of Art as part of Prospect.1 New Orleans, the international contemporary art biennial on view at 25 venues throughout the city.

Emergency Response Studio (or, *ERS*) is a solar-powered, mobile artist's studio, repurposed from a salvaged FEMA-style trailer. This sustainably rebuilt, off-the-grid living and work space is designed to enable artists to “embed” in post-disaster settings, and respond and contribute creatively. Villinski, a former New Orleans resident, conceived the project in response to the devastation of post-Katrina New Orleans as, in the artist's words, “a symbol of transformation and possibility for the communities of the Gulf Coast.”

ERS will be on view outside of the Museum continuously, though the interior of the trailer will only be accessible during limited public hours as determined by Prospect.1 New Orleans. If you are visiting only to see *ERS*, please call ahead to confirm that the work is open.

More about *Emergency Response Studio*

The project playfully and purposefully deconstructs the template of the now iconic FEMA trailer. Villinski gutted a 30-foot Gulfstream Cavalier and rebuilt it with cleantech solutions. The studio is entirely powered by a 1.6 kilowatt photo-voltaic solar system featuring an array of nine large solar panels, which tilt upward from the trailer's roof to face the sun.

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Additional power comes from a micro-wind turbine spinning atop a 40-foot high aluminum mast. Eight large batteries, each weighing as much as an average man, store this power and are seen underfoot through a clear Lucite floor section.

A large wall section cranks down to become a deck, a 10-foot geodesic skylight provides daylight and expansive headroom in the work area, and a 13-foot wall section has shed its aluminum siding in favor of clear polycarbonate sheathing. Symbolically, the structure is expansive, both opening outwardly and inviting the outside in, enabling free exchange between artist and environment in a collaboration of reinvention.

ERS has been reconstructed with sustainable, green materials—recycled denim insulation, zero-VOC paints, bamboo cabinetry, compact fluorescent lighting, reclaimed wood and floor tiles made from linseed oil—minimizing the structure’s carbon footprint and enhancing quality of life for its inhabitants. Though designed as an artist’s studio, the *Emergency Response Studio* also serves as a prototype for self-sufficient, solar-powered mobile housing, and explores the application of sustainable materials in the construction of trailers and other forms of temporary housing.

Villinski, who creates art out of discarded objects and repurposes them into provocative sculptural pieces of beauty and transformation, conceived the project in 2006 while in New Orleans preparing for a gallery exhibition. Moved to create artwork in direct response to the conditions of post-Katrina New Orleans, he wished he could bring his New York studio with him to the Lower Ninth Ward. With the *Emergency Response Studio*, the artist suggests that inventive, non-traditional thinking practiced by visual artists can be a valuable part of the mix as we attempt to heal what is damaged and confront imminent challenges of all sorts.

Emergency Response Studio is traveling to multiple venues during the run of Prospect.1 New Orleans. Following its three-week visit to NOMA and City Park, the trailer will continue to other sites, including The Charles Colton School, Tulane University and downtown New Orleans.

More about Villinski

Paul Villinski is a graduate of New York’s Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. His work has been featured in numerous exhibitions and is found in major collections, including recent acquisitions by the Museum of Arts and Design in New York and the New Orleans Museum of Art.

For more information on Villinski and the Emergency Response Studio, visit www.emergencyresponsestudio.org.

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About NOMA and the Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden

The New Orleans Museum of Art, founded in 1910 by Isaac Delgado, houses more than 30,000 art objects encompassing 4,000 years of world art. Works from the permanent collection, along with continuously changing temporary exhibitions, are on view in the Museum's 46 galleries Wednesdays from noon to 8 p.m. and Thursdays to Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission to the Museum is free to Louisiana residents through the generosity of The Helis Foundation.

Admission to the adjacent Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden, featuring work by 57 artists, including several of the 20th century's great master sculptors, is always free during regular Museum hours.

The New Orleans Museum of Art and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden are fully accessible to handicapped visitors and wheelchairs are available from the front desk.

For more information, call (504) 659-4100 or visit www.noma.org.

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