



## **Selected Press Coverage**

ARTnews, "Encouraging Wards," October 2008

Time Magazine, "New Biennial for New Orleans," September 8, 2008

The New York Times, "In Katrina's Wake, a New Biennial," September 7, 2008

The Times-Picayune, "A Really Big Show," September 5, 2008

Artforum, "Big But Not Easy," September 2008

Art in America Annual, 2008-08

Museums New Orleans, cover feature, 2008-09

Elle (Deutsch), "Kunst-Hotspots international," September 2008

Art + Auction, "Conversation with Dan Cameron," July 2008

The New York Times, "New Orleans as Gallery," March 7, 2008

The New York Times, "A Biennial for New Orleans," April 27, 2007

The Art Newspaper, "A biennial to help New Orleans recover from Hurricane Katrina," June 2007

Art + Auction, "Gulf Buddy," July 2007

Art & Antiques, "U.S. Biennial to Launch in 2008," October 2007

SPOTLIGHT



◀ **Dan Cameron, the curator of Prospect.1 New Orleans.**

**OPPOSITE Tony Fitzpatrick's *Boeuf Gras*, 2007 (top). Alexandre Arrechea's *Mississippi Bucket*, 2008 (bottom), which will be installed on the plaza outside the Poydras Street entrance to Harrah's Casino.**

# Encouraging Wards

A biennial brings art to communities across New Orleans

BY CARLY BERWICK

It started, like so many things in New Orleans after August 28, 2005, with a sense of outrage. The following January, after the floodwaters unloosed by Hurricane Katrina drowned much of the city, gallerist Arthur Roger hosted a panel discussion about the future of New Orleans, as part of a group exhibition he had put together called "The Comeback Show." (It was organized, Roger points out, even before the postal service was back and running.)

Dan Cameron, 51, a New York curator and frequent New Orleans visitor for the past 20 years, was a panelist, along with Duke University art history professor

Richard Powell and historian and author Douglas Brinkley.

"Doug Brinkley said something that I found annoying," says Cameron, at the time a senior-curator-at-large at the New Museum in New York. "He said that once New Orleans tourism came back, that would be fine for the art world. I said, 'Tourists don't buy art. If you want to help the New Orleans art world, you have to get the serious art-world players to come to town—that's what's going to make a difference.'" (Brinkley did not respond to a request for comment, but others who attended the discussion confirmed the gist of the debate.)

The exchange led to more talk that night over dinner between Cameron and longtime New Orleans friends such as William Fagaly, curator of African art at the New Orleans Museum of Art. The next morning, Cameron realized what a major contribution it would be to stage a biennial in the city. "The art world seemed to be the only part of the cultural community in America that didn't seem to understand why New Orleans was important," he says.

An art fair was out of the question. Even though fairs are "all the rage," as Cameron notes, they are not his area of expertise. But a biennial featuring dozens of international artists was something he had done before, having curated the 2003 biennial in Istanbul and the 2006 biennial in Taipei.

From the first of next month through January 18, people will be able to judge for themselves the success of Prospect.1 New Orleans, when it will launch at indoor and outdoor sites across the city. Even September's Hurricane Gustav didn't put a damper on it. Eighty-one artists—many familiar to the international biennial circuit (such as Xu Bing, Leandro Erlich, William Kentridge and Julie Mehretu), others purely local—are presenting works that respond to the city.

Among the artists is Los Angeles-based Mark Bradford, known for his gridded, detritus-based collage paintings. "Dan sent me an e-mail about a year ago at 5:01 P.M. and I e-mailed him back saying yes at about 5:05," Bradford recalls. "I knew I wanted to do a project in New Orleans, but I didn't have the venue. I was very attracted to all that detritus and the shipping containers. The ark, I'm going to build an ark, that was in my head." So Bradford traveled to New Orleans for the first time, walked around, and came across L9 Center for the Arts in the Lower Ninth Ward. Chandra McCormick and Keith Calhoun, the photographers who founded L9, introduced Bradford to locals who are collaborating with him to build a huge ark in situ.

Bradford also introduced Cameron to L9, and now the center is an official venue of the biennial. "It's like this

whole city has been turned into circuits and tentacles—in every little community there’s something to do with the biennial,” Bradford notes.

Although Cameron has been a curator for most of his career, running a nonprofit was completely new to him. Originally from upstate New York, he moved to New York City after graduating from Bennington College. “I was sort of instinctively organizing shows in high school and college without knowing what it was called,” says Cameron, who became a freelance curator in the early 1980s in New York.

His experiences in the art scene of the time were channeled into one of the first ‘80s-nostalgia exhibitions, titled “East Village USA.” The chaotic, esthetically jangling show of spray paint and neon was held at the New Museum, where he worked from 1995 to 2006. There he also organized mid-career retrospectives of Kentridge and Carroll Dunham.

In 2006, inspired by the conversation started at Roger’s gallery, Cameron set to work in the decimated city, trying to raise seed money for his New Orleans biennial idea, even though phone lines were not yet up (the New Orleans Museum of Art still uses satellite phones). “The city was crippled, there was no tourism, no economy,” says Cameron. “There was no good news coming out of New Orleans in all of 2006, except for individual acts of compassion or bravery.”

Eventually he received a grant from the Toby Devan Lewis Foundation and established an office in New York, with about a half-dozen employees. He left the New Museum and decided to devote himself to his startup. By mid-summer of this year, Cameron’s year-old nonprofit, U.S. Biennial, Inc., had raised more than half of the \$3.5 million cost of the biennial, with powerful art-world supporters such as Agnes Gund and Beth Rudin DeWoody behind him. In early July alone,

Prospect.1 New Orleans received grants totaling \$225,000 from the Getty Fund for New Orleans, the Starry Night Fund of the Tides Foundation, and the Ruth U. Fertel Foundation. (Cameron has since been hired as a curator at the Center for Contemporary Arts in New Orleans.)

According to Cameron, 100,000 people are expected to visit Prospect.1 New Orleans. These visitors will also be engaging in a grand civic improvement project. The explicit goal of the biennial is to bring another tourism segment and its money into the city. Although other biennials have come to strife-torn cities, such as Johannesburg in 1997, “the notion of having a biennial shortly after man-made and natural disaster,” Cameron points out, “that’s never happened before.”

For this first, untested biennial, he invited friends such as New York painters Fred Tomaselli and Amy Sillman, as well as artists who, Cameron

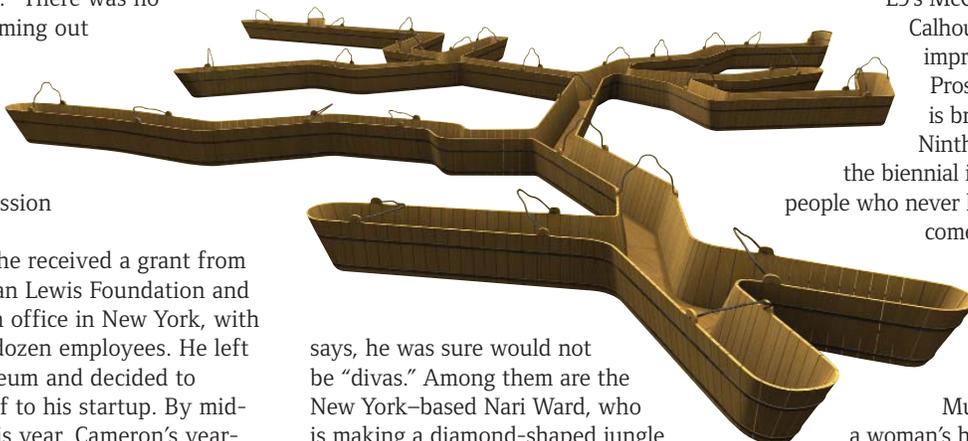
New Orleans area, including photographer Deborah Luster and multimedia tapestry artist Shawne Major.

L9’s McCormick and

Calhoun are extremely impressed by what Prospect.1 New Orleans is bringing to the Lower Ninth Ward. “By having the biennial in the community, people who never had a chance to come to the nontourist part will get out of the norm,” says Calhoun, who also notes artist Wangechi

Mutu’s restoration of a woman’s house as part of her biennial contribution. “Just with what she’s doing for that one lady, the biennial already means a lot.”

Carly Berwick is a contributing editor of ARTnews.



says, he was sure would not be “divas.” Among them are the New York-based Nari Ward, who is making a diamond-shaped jungle gym on site at the Battle Ground Baptist Church, while fellow New Yorker Paul Villinski is contributing one of his solar-and-wind-powered repurposed FEMA trailers. Only 10 percent of the artists in the show are from the

TOP: COURTESY THE ARTIST AND PIEROGI, BROOKLYN; BOTTOM: COURTESY THE ARTIST AND MAGNAN PROJECTS, NEW YORK

# Special Issue: **The Republicans**

# TIME

# Arts

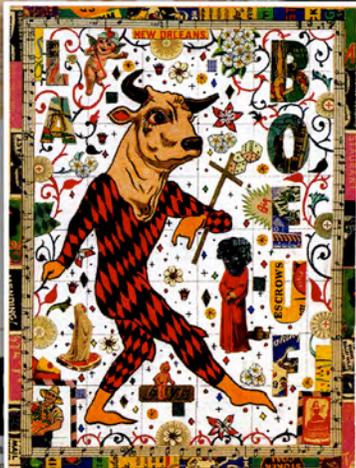


BOOKS  
MOVIES  
ART  
TELEVISION  
OPERA  
MUSIC  
DANCE  
THEATER  
ARCHITECTURE

# Fall Preview



Forty things to watch, read, visit, download, TiVo, to tell your friends about and keep you busy till Thanksgiving.



## ART

### New Biennial For New Orleans

IN THE MONTHS AFTER 9/11, Robert De Niro helped bring life back to lower Manhattan by starting the now thriving Tribeca Film Festival. Three years after Hurricane Katrina, the art world is doing something similar in the Crescent City. "Prospect.1 New Orleans," a new biennial of international art, will launch there in November and run for 11 weeks. Headed by Dan Cameron, director of visual arts at the city's Contemporary Arts Center, the exhibition will put the work of 81 artists from more than 30 countries in venues around town, all of them free. The roster of stars includes Cai Guo-Qiang, William Kentridge and Julie Mehretu, so there's a good chance you'll be blown away by something. 11/1

#### FUN FACT

Navin Rawanchaikul will produce a comic book about Big Easy cabdrivers

36>

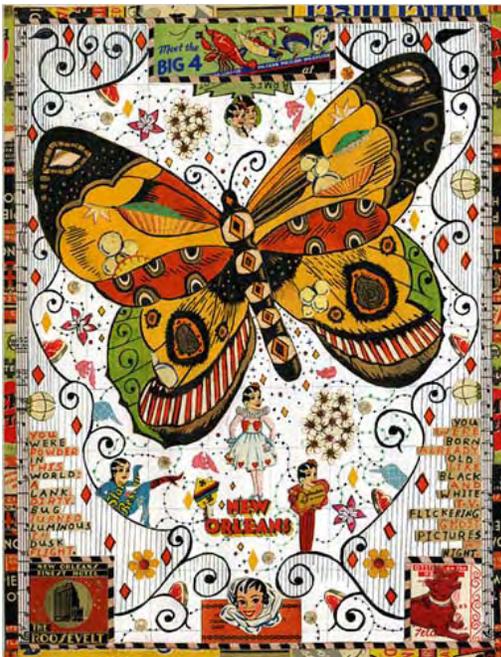


September 7, 2008

## In Katrina's Wake, a New Biennial

By [ROBERTA SMITH](#)

MAYBE it's a sign of the times — or at least the frustrations of museum work. Or perhaps some sudden departures facilitate speedy arrivals elsewhere. In 1977 Marcia Tucker was fired from her curator's job at the [Whitney Museum of American Art](#). Within months she had founded the New Museum, which she led for 22 years.



*Courtesy of the artist and Pierogi, Brooklyn*  
Tony Fitzpatrick's "Marigny Moth" is among the works to be included in the exhibition "Prospect.1 New Orleans."

In 1995 Ms. Tucker hired Dan Cameron as senior curator. Late in 2005 he resigned from the New Museum, for reasons that remain unclear. In January 2006, after Mr. Cameron attended a forum on the cultural future of New Orleans, the idea of an international biennial in the city took root in his mind.

Over the next year he founded a nonprofit company, U.S. Biennial Inc., to oversee the project and began to raise money. The exhibition was officially announced in February 2007. Called "Prospect.1 New Orleans," it will open Nov. 1, showing the work of 81 artists in 20 museums, art centers and public spaces around the city.

The idea is not entirely new to the city: the New Orleans Museum of Art staged triennial exhibitions of Southeastern American art from 1885 to 2005. The 2005 show was on view at the time [Hurricane Katrina](#) struck.

Mr. Cameron is a veteran at operating ex museum, having organized several well-received large exhibitions of international contemporary art in Europe in the late 1980s and early '90s as well as the Istanbul Biennial in 2003 and the Taipei Biennial in 2006.

His international experience shows in the artists he has selected for "Prospect.1." About a third of them are from New Orleans and other parts of the United States, with the remaining distributed fairly evenly among Europe, Africa, Asia and South America. And who knows what else Mr. Cameron and U.S. Biennial Inc. might accomplish — a franchise, perhaps?

One new recurring exhibition in a year is a lot in this country, but the new season actually promises two. Last June the New Museum announced the formation of a triennial for emerging artists, to be inaugurated next spring. Organized by a team of the museum's curators, the show will examine the work of artists born mostly in the early 1980s who have come of age in the new millennium; all will be 33 or younger. The age maximum is signaled in the first triennial's title: "Younger Than Jesus."

# Art in America

ANNUAL 2008-2009

## 2008 California Biennial

The 10th edition of this statewide round-up, guest-curated by Lauri Firsenberg, features over 50 artists working in all mediums. The roster includes emerging and established figures (among the latter Edgar Arceneaux, Walead Beshty, Bruce Connor, Sam Durant, Daniel Joseph Martinez, Raymond Pettibon and Yvonne Rainer). In some instances, teacher and student are paired in a creative dialogue. The biennial, which runs Oct. 26, 2008-Mar. 15, 2009, is on view at the Orange County Museum of Art's Newport Beach and South Coast Plaza venues and features several offsite projects.

## Jan Lievens

"Jan Lievens: A Dutch Master Rediscovered" presents works by the innovative 17th-century painter. Though had a short career in London, he worked in the Netherlands, England, and the D.C., Milwaukee, and New York City. May 11.

## Nov

### Prospect.1

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Gallery Guide – Museums  
Annual '08-'09

# MUSEUMS

## NEW ORLEANS

**Prospect.1 New Orleans**  
The largest biennial of international contemporary art ever organized in the U.S.

COMPLIMENTS OF  
**NOIMC**  
New Orleans Tourism  
Marketing Corporation  
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# The Times-Picayune

## A REALLY BIG SHOW

### **Dan Cameron prepares for a citywide art exhibit called Prospect 1**

Friday, September 05, 2008

By Doug MacCash

#### **Art critic**

A three-story Noah's ark made of recycled plywood will soon be assembled in the Lower 9th Ward. A strange rain-catcher will pop up on the plaza of Harrah's New Orleans casino -- a branching, surrealistic bucket in the shape of the Mississippi river delta. Elsewhere in the city, a gigantic, diamond-shaped steel cage stuffed with discarded fitness equipment will appear. So will a ghostly home made of nothing more than strands of lights; a FEMA trailer converted to a disaster-proof artist's studio; a blank concrete chapel without doors, windows, or seams; and a ladder protruding from the earth, leading to a second story window -- not a house, just a window.

In the next few weeks, New Orleans will blossom with conceptual art in more than a dozen locations, indoor and out. They will be created by 81 of the finest artists from 30 countries around the globe -- including New Orleans artists such as John Barnes Jr., Willie Birch, Victor Harris, Srdjan Loncar, Luis Cruz Azaceta, Deborah Luster, Skylar Fein and the late Roy Ferdinand.

Art lovers are invited to take it all in free of charge.

The occasion is Prospect 1 New Orleans, a citywide international art exhibition that opens Nov. 1 and continues through Jan. 18. The event is modeled on similar successful shows in far-flung locations from Venice, Italy, to San Paulo, Brazil, to Sydney, Australia, that draw jet-set art lovers like bees to nectar.

Prospect 1 was conceived by internationally known curator Dan Cameron -- former curator of the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York -- who hopes to aid in the city's ongoing recovery by putting on an art party the likes of which the United States has never seen. He plans for New Orleans to host the art event every two years.

At a Prospect 1 promotional lecture in late August, Cameron said that he attended his first New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival in New Orleans in 1987 and hasn't missed one since. If Prospect 1 succeeds in drawing visitors the way other international art exhibitions do (the Venice Biennale drew 300,000 during its five-month run in 2007), then Cameron may be bringing us the visual art equivalent of the world-renowned music festival.

Cameron said he was confident that international art tourists would find their way to Prospect 1, but he wants the show to reach a Louisiana audience as well. To that end he plans a series of New Orleans "barnstorming" presentations this month where he will show photos of the artwork as well as answer questions.

Cameron, who began planning Prospect 1 in January 2006, said that though he is terribly busy, preparations are going well. He said he has raised \$2.8 million through grants and donations -- just short of the \$2.9 million originally needed -- and that sales of \$1,000 tickets to an opening gala on Halloween will bring in the rest.

"Fundraising is fantastic," he said. "We are right on schedule. Since we spoke (in May) we probably raised \$1 million. With gala sales we should be right on schedule."

In the next weeks, a final lineup of art locations will be announced, Cameron said, noting that some details are still being worked out. In late August, the Ogden Museum of Southern Art was dropped from the list of official sites -- though the museum will still be featured on the Prospect 1 map of satellite venues. Cameron insists all Prospect 1 exhibits be free; the Ogden requires a \$10 admission. The Ashe Cultural Center has also dropped off of the official site list, since most of its exhibit space will be dedicated to its 10-year anniversary programming.

"It's normal," Cameron said of the last-minute changes. "It's not because something went wrong. It's just the shifting around of practicalities."

"There's just a million things going on," he said of the hectic home stretch.

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## PROSPECT 1 NEW ORLEANS PREVIEWS

**What:** Curator Dan Cameron will give preview presentations on the first citywide biennial of international contemporary art in the United States. Prospect 1 runs Nov. 1 through Jan. 18, with an opening gala on Oct. 31, at New Orleans museums and sites around the city.

**When:**

Wednesday, 6 p.m. at LeMieux Galleries, 332 Julia St.

Thursday, 6 p.m. at Good Children Gallery, 4037 St. Claude Ave.

Sept. 18, 6 p.m. at Design Within Reach, 3138 Magazine St.

Sept. 24, 6 p.m. at The Young Leadership Council general membership meeting, location to be announced. Call 504.585.1500.

Information: [www.prospectneworleans.org](http://www.prospectneworleans.org).

# ARTFORUM

SEPTEMBER 2008 I N T E R N A T I O N A L

F  
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US NEWS

PREVIEWS

## Big But Not Easy

RACHEL CHURNER ON "PROSPECT.1 NEW ORLEANS"



Victor Harris, Big Chief of the Fi Yi Yi Indians, during Mardi Gras, New Orleans, 2007. Photo: Jeffrey D. Ehrenreich.

AMONG THE MANY SPRAY-PAINTED slogans scrawled on abandoned buildings, washed-out pickup trucks, and makeshift plywood signs that appear in Spike Lee's documentary *When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts* (2006) is a singularly apt comment written on the side of a car: HOPE IS NOT A PLAN. Even now, after years of telethons, tax breaks, and official visits, the statement continues to express the frustration of a city in disrepair, caught in the unending fiasco that is the FEMA relief effort.

Only hope, or a plan? It is this difficult question that is posed by the first New Orleans biennial of contemporary art, a mega-exhibition advertised as a cross between the city's JazzFest and the Venice Biennale. The new biennial's curator, Dan Cameron, intends for it to help "reinvigorate" and "redevelop" the city. Opening on November 1, and on view until January 18, 2009, "Prospect.1 New Orleans" will be the largest biennial of contemporary art ever organized in the

United States, with an estimated hundred thousand square feet of exhibition space. Eighty-one artists from more than thirty countries are participating, and many of the names are blockbusters: Cai Guo-Qiang, Isaac Julien, William Kentridge, Yasumasa Morimura, Pierre et Gilles, et al. The biennial will occupy more than twenty venues throughout the city, including the Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans (where Cameron, for many years a senior curator at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York, has been director of visual arts since May 2007), the Ashé Cultural Arts Center, the New Orleans African American Museum, and the US Mint Louisiana State Museum (where Croatian-born, New Orleans-based sculptor Srdjan Loncar plans to place a pile of faux bills, with briefcases for those who wish to take a bundled stack or two). The devastated Lower Ninth Ward will figure prominently as the location for several installations. Sculptor Nari

Ward, for example, will work there on the site of an abandoned church, and Paul Villinski will present a trailer like those supplied to homeless residents by FEMA (before being declared uninhabitable due to dangerous levels of formaldehyde fumes)—which he is converting into an off-the-grid, mobile artist's studio.

In the most optimistic light, "Prospect.1" could be seen as a grand-scale version of Paul Chan's *Waiting for Godot in New Orleans*, staged last November in collaboration with the Classical Theatre of Harlem and local organizations. While Chan is not participating in the biennial, his project demonstrated that contemporary artists could bring something positive to the city: Despite apprehensions that this erudite artist's project would constitute a kind of carpetbagging, it ended up both working as an art project and being welcomed by residents. But a primary risk Chan faced effectively remains: that, despite best

intentions, the city's devastation might function merely as a scenic backdrop for contemporary international work. In this regard, the politically incisive work of Willie Birch, Skylar Fein, and Victor Harris and the Fi Yi Yi Indians will be both welcome and crucial in avoiding the impression of the regional culture's being usurped by the international art world. These local artists create work specific to New Orleans's vibrant music and performance scene, cultural heritage, and African-American demographic.

Perhaps the complex task of—and daunting measure for—this biennial is encapsulated best by Cameron's statement that his exhibition "is a primarily humanitarian endeavor, but one that just happens to have incredibly high artistic standards." The intention of resuscitating a city in shambles by hosting a biennial inevitably verges on hubris: Characterized as they are by their get-in-get-out approach, biennials may bring in tourism money, but they will not rebuild a city's infrastructure or bring displaced citizens home. The most significant aspect of this exhibition, then, may be that it (perhaps unintentionally) raises critical questions about the potential of cultural rejuvenation: Can bringing an international art exhibition to New Orleans encourage a revitalization of the indigenous cultural heritage of the Paris of the South? Can it foster any connection to the homegrown culture that was ravaged in the storm's aftermath? Or is it more like bringing the

**Can bringing an international art exhibition to New Orleans encourage a revitalization of the indigenous cultural heritage of the Paris of the South?**

circus to town? Despite the press release's pronouncement that "Prospect.1" is "founded on the principle that art engenders social progress," the exhibition is poised productively to question that very principle—and the relationship between art and activism in general—even if by its possible missteps. □

RACHEL CHURNER IS A NEW YORK-BASED ART HISTORIAN.





SEPTEMBER 2008

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Ob 20 oder 60 – Outfits, die Ihnen wirklich schmeicheln. Und: die raffiniertesten Stylingtricks dazu

## HOSENANZÜGE

Endlich sind sie wieder da!

der große  
haar- und  
guic...

Letzter Tipp: New Orleans. Drei Jahre nach Hurrikan Katrina will die Stadt mit der **Prospect 1** (1.11. bis 18.1.) die größte Biennale in den USA starten. Dan Cameron, Direktor am Contemporary Arts Center, hat 81 inter-

nationale Künstler eingeladen, die in Museen, Kulturzentren, Lagerhallen, Fabriken und historischen Gebäuden ausstellen werden. "Ich möchte aus der Stadt einen Ausstellungsort machen. Unsere Museumsgäste sollen auch die Stadt mit ihrer einzigartigen Geschichte, Musikszene und Küche erleben." **LYDIA SCHMID**

5 Jahre  
Trendschnitte,  
er Gesicht-  
s neue Pflege-  
uperglanz



### Dan Cameron

The 51-year-old curator believes in the transformative power of art. He's helping New Orleans get back on its feet by organizing Prospect 1, which, when it opens in November, will become the largest biennial exhibition ever staged in the United States. Cameron, who worked at New York's New Museum for Contemporary Art from 1995 to 2005, also served as artistic director of the eighth Istanbul Biennial, in 2003, and curated the Taipei Biennial in 2006. He spoke with Sarah Douglas about his strategy for economic revitalization and why he loves the Big Easy.

**Am I right to guess that you have a sentimental attachment to New Orleans?**

I've been a New Orleans freak for 20 years. I was first lured there by the artist Peter Halley, who went to the University of New Orleans for his master's degree. I love it in part because it has always been so isolated and has this extraordinary past, and music is one of my great passions.

**How soon after Katrina did you get involved?**

A week later, the New Orleans gallerist Arthur Roger, who showed Peter Halley 21 years ago, called me from Baton Rouge. He said, "We're already talking about how we are going to rebuild culturally. And your name came up."

**How did the hurricane affect the city's art world?** Fifty percent of New Orleans's artists lost their homes, and dozens lost their life's work. Many

never came back. I became something of a zealot. The impetus for the biennial came during a January 2006 panel discussion I participated in.

**What happened?** [The historian] Doug Brinkley said something that annoyed me. He said—I'm paraphrasing—"When tourism returns to its prestorm levels, then the tourists will begin buying art again, and everything will be OK." I thought, "That formula is not going to fly." If you want to help artists in New Orleans and draw positive attention to the city, you have to get real collectors. Tourists buy souvenirs. Collectors buy art. And to get them here is going to take an art fair—which I think would be a major mistake—or a biennial.

**Why would a fair have been a mistake?** Trying to compete with Art Basel Miami Beach would be very wrong. And I'm not interested in doing a

fair. I'm a biennial curator.

**Do you envision Prospect 1 becoming part of the international biennial circuit?**

I've been adamant about that from the start. That's one of the reasons there are a lot of household names among the participating artists. I want people to say, "This is really worth making the effort to go." I think people want to be part of the city's comeback.

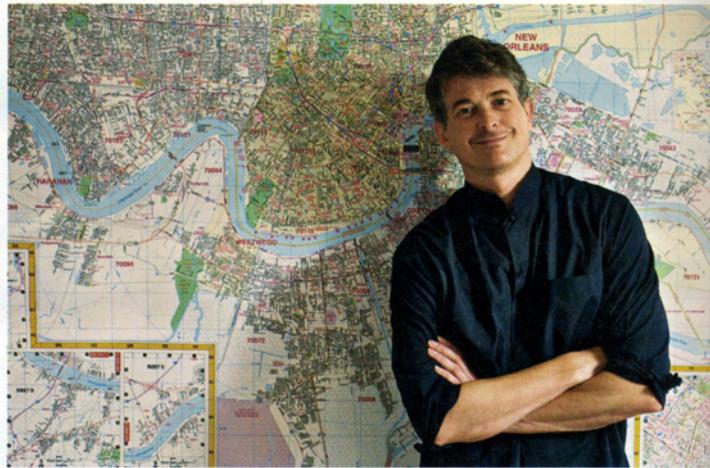
**You've got Fred Tomaselli and William Kentridge; how many local artists will be featured?** I tried for 10 percent New Orleans representation. I don't want to show everyone the first time out and then be

**How many do you think will attend?**

Total attendance of 100,000 is achievable, with 50,000 out-of-state visitors. That would be a huge boost for the economy. It would translate to between \$20 million and \$30 million. I would like to see us get more than that, and I don't think there's a limit. For some weird reason, Americans have turned art savvy.

**Art Basel Miami Beach is also a huge social scene. How about New Orleans?**

I think the party New Orleans is going to throw to welcome people for Prospect 1 is going to blow the art world's collective mind.



floundering. One is a Mardi Gras Indian named Victor Harris, who is the Big Chief of a group called Fi Yi Yi. He works in a very Afrocentric style. He's an incredible figure.

**Does the work to be shown respond to the situation in New Orleans?** Yes. This won't be a quiet or soothing biennial. There will be some strong political statements, and not just about New Orleans but about the war in Iraq and other aspects of our plight in the United States.

**Prospect 1 sounds challenging, since you plan to stage eight projects in the still-devastated Lower Ninth Ward.**

Yes, I am completely reliant on friends, supporters and the City Council. I would not have access by myself. But one thing New Orleanians get right away is when someone loves their city. If you love it and they get that, they give you a lot of rope. People are knocking themselves out to see that there are very few obstacles in my path. ☐

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# The New York Times

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**March 7, 2008**  
**INSIDE ART**

By **CAROL VOGEL**

## NEW ORLEANS AS GALLERY

Prospect.1, an international biennial scheduled to open in New Orleans on Nov. 1, plans to exhibit its art on sites from one end of the city to the other.

“It’s a global show that will be everywhere,” said Dan Cameron, the biennial’s director, “from abandoned warehouses and homes ravaged by Katrina to museums.”

The Los Angeles artist Mark Bradford, for example, is building a Noah’s ark in the shell of a destroyed house.

The 11-week presentation of contemporary art by about 80 national and international artists is designed to help increase tourism and economic activity in New Orleans after [Hurricane Katrina](#).

Among the well-known artists participating are Julie Mehretu (showing a suite of new canvases), Fred Tomaselli and Nari Ward. The local artists include Robin Rhode, who will exhibit her photographs of downtown New Orleans, and Srdjan Loncar, whose sculptures will depict stacks of money: small wooden boxes on which he pastes photocopied versions of large bills.

“If 100,000 people come, it will boost the city’s economy enormously,” Mr. Cameron said. “It’s the concept of the city as a gallery.”

# The New York Times

## Inside Art

*Carol Vogel*

### A Biennial for New Orleans

New Orleans is out to rebuild itself not just physically but culturally, too. Dan Cameron, a former curator at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, has started U.S. Biennial Inc., a nonprofit company whose first project is "Prospect.1, New Orleans," an international biennial scheduled to open on Oct. 4, 2008, in spaces throughout the city.

"I've been a New Orleans zealot for more than 20 years," Mr. Cameron said. The biennial will include artists not just from Louisiana but from all over the country and abroad. So far, Mr. Cameron added, more than 80 artists are expected to participate.

He estimates it will cost about \$3 million to put the event together, and he is hoping for support from foundations, corporations and private sources. The Toby Fund, founded by Toby Devan Lewis, a philanthropist, collector and curator, has given \$500,000 to kick off the project.



INTERNATIONAL EDITION  
**THE ART NEWSPAPER**

New exhibitions

## **A biennial to help New Orleans recover from Hurricane Katrina**

*Former Guggenheim chair, Peter Lewis, and his ex-wife are the main funders*

NEW YORK. An exhibition described by its organisers as “the largest biennial of international contemporary art ever organised in the United States” is to open in October 2008 in New Orleans.

The project is expected to cost around \$3m. Contributions to date have come from the billionaire Peter Lewis (\$200,000), who was chairman of the trustees of the Guggenheim Museum in New York for six years until he resigned following a much-publicised dispute with then director Thomas Krens. Mr Lewis’s ex-

wife Toby Devan Lewis has given the single largest donation to the exhibition (\$400,000) which is to be curated by Dan Cameron, the recently appointed director of visual arts at the Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) in New Orleans.

“I have always been bewildered by the absence of a biennial culture in the US,” says Mr Cameron, noting that the show will help the city in its struggle to recover from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

The exhibition, “Prospect1”, will include more than 80 artists,

about half from the US, including several from the State of Louisiana, and half from abroad. The exhibition will take place in venues around the city, including the CAC, the New Orleans Museum of Art, and the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, as well as industrial venues and outdoor spaces.

Mr Cameron says the model will be the 2003 Istanbul Biennale which he curated and which included several large venues and a dozen site-specific projects around the city.

Mr Cameron is an old hand at organising international surveys, but to launch a major show from scratch he needed the help of former colleagues at the New Museum in New York where he served as senior curator from 1995 to 2005. Several of the New Museum’s patrons, including Toby Devan Lewis, a trustee and benefactor, joined Mr Cameron in founding US Biennial, Inc, a New York non-profit organisation set up to mount the New Orleans show.

The organisers anticipate the biennial—which will be free of charge—will attract 250,000 visitors. “People visiting Art Basel/Miami Beach will have a short flight to pop over,” says Mr Cameron, who believes the boost in tourism will stimulate economic development in New Orleans. “We are at a fantastic moment in terms of popular interest in contemporary art. Why not try to leverage that to do something good? New Orleans desperately needs help.”

**Jason Edward Kaufman**

# ART+ AUCTION

## NEW ORLEANS

**Gulf Buddy** | **Dan Cameron** is on a mission to help revitalize the Gulf Coast. Cameron, 50, who fell in love with the Big Easy when he attended **Jazz Fest** two decades ago, has been made visual arts director of the **Contemporary Arts Center** in New Orleans.

A senior curator from 1995 to 2005 at New York's **New Museum of Contemporary Art** and a seasoned organizer of international exhibitions, including biennials in Istanbul (2003) and Taipei (2006), Cameron says he took the three-year appointment to implement his vision for a biennial in New Orleans. He conceived of the project, known as **PROSPECT.1**, as a means to help restore the city's cultural infrastruc-

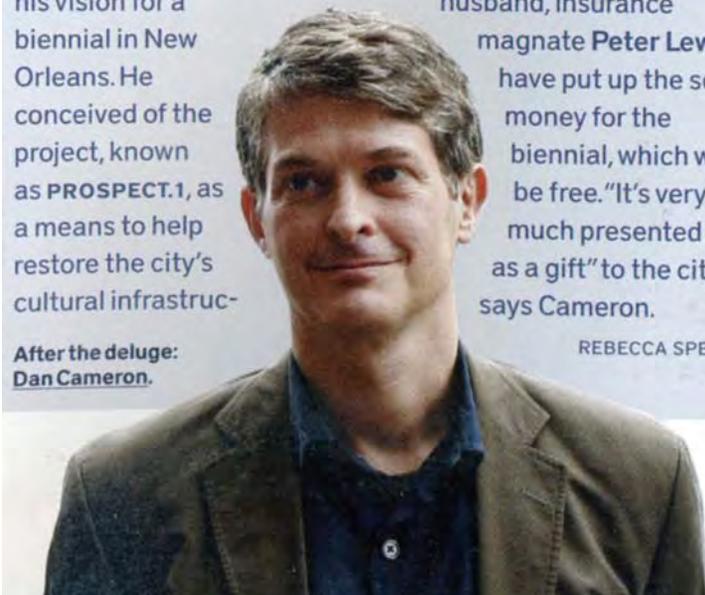
ture in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. "It's the best way I know of to use what I do to contribute to New Orleans's rebuilding," he says.

Opening October 4, 2008, the three-month exhibition will feature more than 75 regional, national and international artists. Cameron is hoping to show their work in the city's culture centers—for instance, the **New Orleans Museum of Art**, which miraculously survived the storm with minimal damage to its collection.

With public funding scarce, Cameron is looking to private donors to finance his \$3.5 million endeavor. **Toby Devan Lewis** and her former husband, insurance magnate **Peter Lewis**, have put up the seed money for the biennial, which will be free. "It's very much presented as a gift" to the city, says Cameron.

**After the deluge:**  
**Dan Cameron.**

REBECCA SPENCE



## U.S. Biennial to Launch in 2008

**NEW ORLEANS**—The States may soon have its own major international biennial, as Prospect.1 New Orleans, is scheduled to open in late October 2008 and run through January 2009. Curator Dan Cameron says Prospect.1, modeled in the tradition of major festivals such as the Venice Biennale and the Sao Paulo Biennial, will “bring the U.S. into the network of global art in a non-commercial way.”

Cameron, who previously curated biennials in Taipei (2006) and Istanbul (2003), established Prospect.1 under the auspices of U.S. Biennial Inc. soon after accepting a position as Director of Visual Arts at the Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans (CAC). He has invited more than 75 local, national and international artists to create works for the event, which is slated to take place at CAC, the New Orleans Museum of Art and The Ogden Museum of Southern Art, as well as spaces

around the city. “The idea is to discover the city geographically as you explore the art visually,” explains Cameron.

While he has secured crucial support from the city’s convention and visitors bureau and the New Orleans Downtown Development District, he’s looking outside the city for the majority of financial assistance with numerous requests to private individuals, corporations and foundations. Collector Toby Lewis, on the board of the New Museum in New York where Cameron was a curator from 1995 to 2005, and her former husband, Peter Lewis, already have contributed significant funds. And, while the festival itself will be free, tourism dollars from the biennial will certainly be a welcome addition to the city—a fact Cameron readily admits. “The festival also is a creative way to ask the art world to help in the rebuilding of the city.”

—REBECCA DIMLING COCHRAN