Pratt News
Office of Public Relations

Pratt Institute
200 Willoughby Avenue
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Pratt Manhattan Gallery and Van Alen Institute to present an exhibition that examines the worldwide phenomenon of urban decline and possibilities of creative intervention

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Shrinking Cities, International Research
December 8, 2006 – January 21, 2007
Opening Reception:
5:30 – 7:30 PM, Thursday, December 7

Van Alen Institute
30 West 22nd Street, 6th floor
New York, NY 10010
212.924.7000

Shrinking Cities, Interventions
December 8, 2006 – February 17, 2007
Opening Reception:
6:30 – 8:30 PM, Thursday, December 7
Gallery: Monday – Friday, 10 AM – 6 PM

Pratt Manhattan Gallery
144 West 14th Street, 2nd floor
New York, NY 10011
212.647.7778
Gallery: Tuesday – Saturday, 11 AM – 6 PM

NEW YORK, N.Y., November 15, 2006—While international urban discourse focuses exclusively on the growing megalopolises, zones of shrinkage have been forming and are generally ignored. *Shrinking Cities*, a four year project of the German Federal Cultural Foundation, has investigated the worldwide phenomenon of urban shrinkage by focusing on four urban regions: Detroit (USA), Halle/Leipzig (Germany), Manchester/ Liverpool (U.K.), and Ivanovo (Russia).

The project included two phases, during which a network of more than 200 artists, architects, academics, and local initiatives approached the question, "How can we grasp urban decline and what do we do with shrinking cities?" The results have been presented in two exhibitions, several books, digital publications, and numerous public events. Now, the *Shrinking Cities* exhibition will be shown in New York as the start of an international tour.

A press preview will take place on December 7 from 1-3 PM at Pratt Manhattan Gallery with remarks by curator Philipp Oswalt, at 1:30 PM.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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With a combined exhibition space of 4,000 square feet, Pratt Manhattan Gallery and Van Alen Institute will simultaneously host *Shrinking Cities* in New York. The exhibition includes 32 contributions by artists, architects, filmmakers, journalists, and researchers including Nikolaus Brade, Sergei Bratkov, Mitch Cope, John Davies, interboro/CUP, Cedric Price, Bas Princen, Isa Rosenberger, Christoph Schäfer, O.M. Ungers, and Ingo Vetter.

Van Alen Institute will host part one of the exhibition, *Shrinking Cities, International Research*, which examines the phenomenon of urban decline. The four focus cities are explored and represented in diverse forms of documentation by artists, architects, filmmakers, journalists, and researchers. Themes include a worldwide study of shrinking cities, the change of urban landscapes, everyday practices, and political conflicts under the conditions of urban decline.

Pratt Manhattan Gallery will host part two of the exhibition, *Shrinking Cities, Interventions*, which presents strategies for action. It is divided into five areas: *Negotiating Inequality*, *Self-Governance*, *Creating Images*, *Organizing Retreat*, and *Occupying Space*. Commissioned projects range from artistic interventions and self-empowerment strategies through architectural, landscape, media and performance interventions, to new legal regulations and utopian visions.

A joint reception on December 7 will launch the exhibition. The public is invited to attend both openings that are within walking distance of one another. Van Alen Institute will be open from 5:30 - 7:30 PM and Pratt Manhattan Gallery will be open from 6:30 - 8:30 PM.

THE FOLLOWING SERIES OF PUBLIC TALKS/FILM SCREENINGS WILL TAKE PLACE AT MULTIPLE VENUES IN NEW YORK CITY IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE EXHIBITION:

Friday, December, 8, 6:30 PM, *film*
Occupying Space:
Experimental Projects in (East) Germany.
Center for Architecture

Saturday, December 9, 3:00 PM, *conference*
Shrinking Cities: Negotiating Inequality,
speakers will include Phillip Oswalt, curator; Johannes Fiedler, contributor; Damon Rich, RostenWoo, Center for Urban Pedagogy, contributors; and Neil Smith, Center for Place, Culture and Politics, CUNY.
Center for Architecture

Tuesday, December 12, 6:30 - 7:30 PM, *in conversation*
The Bronx: Shrinking?
Adolfo Carrion, Jr., Bronx Borough President; Michael Sorkin, director, the Graduate Urban Design Program, City College of New York and principal, Michael Sorkin Studio.
Van Alen Institute

Friday, January 5, 6:30 PM, *film*
Self Governance: Urban Agriculture.
Center for Architecture

Friday, January, 12, 6:30 PM, *film*
Creating Images: Music Cultures.
Center for Architecture

Tuesday, January 30, 6:00 PM, *symposium*
Is New Orleans a Shrinking City?
A Confrontation between Ecology and Politics.
Panelists will include: Phillip Oswalt, curator, *Shrinking Cities*; James Dart, special lecturer, School of Architecture, New Jersey Institute of Technology; Deborah Gans, professor, School of Architecture, Pratt Institute; and Frederic Schwartz, Frederic Schwartz Architects.
Pratt Manhattan, Room 213

Center for Architecture admission:
$10 members, $15 non-members
All other venues are free and open to the public.

SHRINKING CITIES NEW YORK PUBLIC TALKS/FILM SCREENING VENUES:

Center for Architecture 536 LaGuardia Place, New York, New York 10012
Tel: 212.683.0023 *www.aiany.org/centerforarchitecture*

Pratt Manhattan 144 West 14th Street, room 213, New York, New York 10011
Tel: 212.647.7778 *www.pratt.edu/exhibitions*

Van Alen Institute 30 W. 22nd Street, 6th Floor, New York, New York 10010
Tel: 212.924.7000 *www.vanalen.org*

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Shrinking Cities (www.shrinkingcities.com) is a project of the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation) in cooperation with the Project Office; Philipp Oswalt, Gallery for Contemporary Art Leipzig; the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation; and the magazine *archplus*.

Chief curator:
Philipp Oswalt

Co-curators for the follow-up-show in New York City:
William Menking, Professor of Architecture, Pratt Institute
Adi Shamir, Executive Director, Van Alen Institute

Assistant Curator:
Anke Hagemann

Following the New York exhibition, "Shrinking Cities" will be jointly hosted by the Museum of Contemporary Art in Detroit and the Cranbrook Art Museum in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan from February 3, 2007 - April 1, 2007 and will continue its international tour with exhibitions in Tokyo, Japan; Liverpool, U.K.; Saarbrucken, Frankfurt and Dortmund, Germany; St. Petersburg, Russia; Eisernerz, Austria; and Rousse, Bulgaria. The international tour is funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation.

– END –

Shrinking Cities

VAN ALEN INSTITUTE

KULTURSTIFTUNG DES BUNDES

funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation

About Pratt Institute:
Founded in 1887, Pratt Institute is one of the largest independent colleges of art and design in the United States, offering undergraduate and graduate degree programs in the schools of architecture, art and design, information and library science, and liberal arts and sciences. Pratt is located on 25 landscaped acres in the Clinton Hill section of Brooklyn and has a Manhattan campus in a large, newly renovated building on West 14th Street.

About Pratt Manhattan Gallery:
Pratt Manhattan Gallery is a public art gallery affiliated with Pratt Institute. The goals of the gallery are to present significant innovative and intellectually challenging work in the fields of art, architecture, fashion, and design from around the world and to provide a range of educational initiatives to help viewers relate contemporary art to their lives in a meaningful way.