

Foreword

In SiTE:LAB's eight year history, I have organized over twenty temporary site-specific projects, in both underutilized downtown buildings in Grand Rapids, Michigan as well as in Miami and New York. Previous projects have used locations as diverse as an abandoned natural history museum, a nature preserve, vacant commercial buildings and a once-grand downtown hotel. For 2015, SiTE:LAB was presented with an incredibly unique opportunity by Habitat for Humanity of Kent County in Grand Rapids' Roosevelt Park neighborhood. Rumsey Street Project's focus is on large-scale site-specific work done by both local and international artists, until Habitat begins its redevelopment of the property, currently projected to occur in late 2017. At nearly three acres, the Rumsey Street property consists of a mixture of unoccupied buildings, including a former Catholic church and rectory.

Upon her site visit in early 2015, the rectory was the particular abandoned structure chosen by Diana Shpungin to bring *Drawing Of A House (Triptych)* into realization. In our conversations I learned it was intriguing to her for both for its formal architectural structure and its historical memory as a home and place for spiritual practice. Shpungin's work has always placed itself in how we represent memory and the domestic sphere and so this monumental undertaking seemed like an ideal fit to carry her body of work forward.

Diana Shpungin's *Drawing Of A House (Triptych)* fulfills the spirit of SiTE:LAB's mission and is perhaps our (and the artists) most ambitious project to date in terms of process, labor, technology and scale. The project involved over one hundred people and thousands of graphite sticks in the painstaking yet gratifying procedure of completely hand coating a house in graphite pencil. This shimmery coating yielded a truly stunning veneer on the dwelling and stopped many a passerby in their tracks. Additionally, at nightfall the project included an elaborate nine-channel rear-screen projection of Shpungin's meticulously hand-drawn animations. Dependent on the light, time of day and the shifting weather conditions, *Drawing Of A House (Triptych)* provided an experience that was incredibly varied for visitors and could not just be viewed once.

It is intended that SiTE:LAB's activities be designed and implemented in a manner that benefits the surrounding Roosevelt Park neighborhood and *Drawing Of A House (Triptych)* was true to this task by successfully engaging the community. Residents and school groups from the surrounding area were given opportunities to engage with Diana Shpungin and participate in leaving their own personal mark on *Drawing Of A House (Triptych)* and in turn the artwork itself left a positive indelible mark on the neighborhood.

Paul Amenta,
Curatorial Director and Co-founder
SiTE:LAB