



Barr | Gallagher | McCormick

DETROIT REVEALED

PHOTOGRAPHS, 2000-2010

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## DETROIT REVEALED PHOTOGRAPHS, 2000-2010

Nancy W. Barr, John Gallagher, and Carlo McCormick

*Detroit Revealed: Photographs, 2000-2010* presents photographic work inspired by Detroit, its people, industry, and diverse culture as found in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Through their portraits, landscapes, architectural studies, and documentary work, artists and photographers Michelle Andonian, Dawoud Bey, Carlos Diaz, Scott Hocking, Ari Marcopoulos, Andrew Moore, Alec Soth, and Corine Vermeulen shed light on life in the city during one of its most challenging periods. With imagery derived from Detroit's vast urban prairies as well as thriving neighborhoods, factories, community farms, and public spaces, their work provides new windows into the experience and unique character of the Motor City since the year 2000.

Essays by Nancy W. Barr, John Gallagher, and Carlo McCormick examine the subjects and history common to photographic activity in Detroit, the city as the site of transformation and opportunity, and the emergence of new narratives and artistic practice that reveal Detroit as an honest and illuminating indicator of contemporary American experience. *Detroit Revealed: Photographs, 2000-2010* is the first publication to bring forth these ideas and showcase the work of eight artists who have brought their critical and enlightening perspectives on the city together for the first time.

Artists like Scott Hocking (born 1975) were inspired to repurpose Detroit's abandoned buildings for the sake of his site-specific installation work. Interested in the history of Detroit from ancient times through the present, the continuum of time, and the reclamation of nature over manmade landscape, Hocking has, since 2000, foraged throughout Detroit's industrial landscape for found objects to be used in his mixed-media installations. He expanded his artistic practice to include photography, and frequently works in leveled neighborhoods and abandoned industrial areas (pages 51–57). He also uses the medium to document his site-specific installations throughout the city. In a work from 2008, he constructed a sculpture based on the form and shape of an ancient pyramid-like temple, appropriately entitled *Ziggurat* (pages 56–57). The project began in December 2007 and took more than eight months to complete. It involved the placement of more than 6,000 wooden floor blocks found on site in the abandoned Fisher Body Plant. The photograph is a lasting document of work that would disappear in September 2008, after a clean up and closing of the building by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Hocking took on other ambitious installation projects, including *Garden of the Gods* (pages 54–55), which he built and completed on the collapsed roof of the Packard Plant in 2009. His view includes an adjacent cemetery, alluding to the transience of humanity, and the expansive Detroit horizon. For the artist, this site, with its concrete columns, was reminiscent of the Roman Forum and Bernini's Piazza San Pietro. The installation represented the twelve gods of the classical Greek Pantheon, and Hocking used columns as pedestals for twelve discarded wooden television consoles he found in the plant (fig. 6).<sup>18</sup> Hocking photographed the site during the changing seasons and here, as seen in many of his photographs, he has captured the otherworldly winter light and strange stillness of time that defines his perception and experience of twenty-first-century Detroit.

As the sites of continual transition, cities can experience a range of events that determine their condition—expansion and decline, development, redevelopment and overdevelopment—and they suffer and thrive during periods of political and social upheaval and renewal. As the decade closed and leadership in the U.S.



fig. 6. Scott Hocking, *Garden of the Gods, South, Winter* (detail), 2009 (printed in 2010), pigment print, 33 x 49½ in. (83.8 x 125.7 cm). From the series *Garden of the Gods*, 2009–10. Gift of the artist, Scott Hocking and Susanne Hilberry Gallery, 2010.63

Scott Hocking grew up in the Detroit area and attended the College for Creative Studies, Detroit, receiving a BFA in 2000. In 2001 Hocking emerged onto the Detroit art scene with his first serious installation: *Relics*, a collaboration with Clinton Snider, another Detroit-based artist. Created from discards found on sites around Detroit, the installation was part of the Detroit Institute of Arts exhibition *Artists Take on Detroit* in celebration of the city's tercentenary.

For more than a decade, Hocking has continued to ground his artistic practice in the city and experiences the terrain of Detroit on foot. Working during all seasons and often in the sites of abandoned industry and ancient earthworks, he collects artifacts, creates site-specific installations, and photographs the places he encounters. Interested in the cyclical nature of civilization and history, Hocking has noted, "Wherever I go, the history and people of the place influence my artwork. I explore my surroundings for things forgotten or kept out of sight, gather information, images and materials. I'm often inspired or bothered by what I find."

S C O T T  
H O C K I N G

Born 1975, Redford Township, Michigan

Lives in Detroit













## SCOTT HOCKING

### page 51, top left

Scott Hocking, *Baby Palms, Spring*, 2009 (printed in 2010), pigment print, 14½ x 22 in. (36.8 x 55.9 cm). From the series *The Zone*, 1999–2010. Museum Purchase, Coville Photographic Fund, 2010.38.11

### page 51, top right

Scott Hocking, *Concord Couch, Summer*, 2008 (printed in 2010), pigment print, 14½ x 22 in. (36.8 x 55.9 cm). From the series *The Zone*, 1999–2010. Museum Purchase, Coville Photographic Fund, 2010.38.2

### page 51, bottom left

Scott Hocking, *Winfield South, Spring*, 2009 (printed in 2010), pigment print, 14½ x 22 in. (36.8 x 55.9 cm). From the series *The Zone*, 1999–2010. Museum Purchase, Coville Photographic Fund, 2010.38.3

### page 51, bottom right

Scott Hocking, *Concord Swamp Swift, Spring*, 2009 (printed in 2010), pigment print, 14½ x 22 in. (36.8 x 55.9 cm). From the series *The Zone*, 1999–2010. Museum Purchase, Coville Photographic Fund, 2010.38.9

### page 52

Scott Hocking, *Roof Marsh*, 2008 (printed in 2009), pigment print, 22 x 33 in. (55.8 x 83.8 cm). From the series *Roosevelt Warehouse and the Cauldron*, 2007–11. Museum Purchase, DeRoy Photographic Acquisition Endowment Fund, 2009.46

### page 53

Scott Hocking, *Southeast from Roof, Michigan Central*, 2009 (printed in 2010), pigment print, 20 x 30 in. (50.8 x 76.2 cm). From the series *The Egg and MCTS*, 2007–11. Gift of the artist, Scott Hocking and Susanne Hilberry Gallery, 2010.64

### pages 54–55

Scott Hocking, *Garden of the Gods, South, Winter*, 2009 (printed in 2010), pigment print, 33 x 49½ in. (83.8 x 125.7 cm). From the series *Garden of the Gods*, 2009–10. Gift of the artist, Scott Hocking and Susanne Hilberry Gallery, 2010.63

### pages 56–57

Scott Hocking, *Ziggurat—East, Summer*, 2008 (printed in 2009), pigment print, 22 x 33 in. (55.8 x 83.8 cm). From the series *Ziggurat and FB21*, 2007–9. Museum Purchase, DeRoy Photographic Acquisition Endowment Fund, 2009.45