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Media Note

**"Into the Open: Positioning Practice" Exhibition by PARC Foundation and Slought Foundation to Represent the United States at 2008 Venice Architecture Biennale**

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) is pleased to announce the selection of the exhibition *Into the Open: Positioning Practice* to represent the United States at the 2008 Venice Architecture Biennale, September 14 through November 23, in Venice, Italy. The exhibition will highlight the means by which architects reclaim their role in shaping community and the built environment, to expand understanding of American architectural practice and its relationship to civic participation. Founder and editor-in-chief of *The Architect's Newspaper* William Menking, a professor at Pratt Institute, will serve as Commissioner and curator of the exhibition along with Executive Director and Senior Curator at Slought Foundation Aaron Levy and Director of Architecture for the PARC Foundation Andrew Sturm. The exhibition was conceived with the assistance of architects Teddy Cruz and Deborah Gans.

*Into the Open: Positioning Practice* will include an installation, video projections, drawings, photographs and artifacts of the American landscape of buildings, open spaces, parks, civic spaces, urban housing units and other elements, to explore how architects are meeting the challenge of creating new work in light of contemporary design conditions. The exhibition will address factors challenging traditional methods of architecture, such as shifting socio-cultural demographics, changing geo-political boundaries, uneven economic development, and the explosion of migration and urbanization, as it advocates for an expanded conception of architectural practice and responsibilities. Sixteen architects, all of whom actively engage communities in their work on various levels, will demonstrate architectural responses to social and environmental issues explored in the exhibition. The pavilion entrance will be a large-scale installation based on the research conducted by Teddy Cruz of a sixty-mile line running through San Diego County and across the Baja California border.

U.S. proposals for the Venice Architecture Biennale were reviewed by members of the Federal Advisory Committee on International Exhibitions and an expert from the field. The Cultural Programs Division of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs supports and manages the official U.S. participation at selected international exhibitions — including the Venice Visual Arts Biennale, the Sao Paulo Biennale, the Cairo Biennale and others — to ensure that the excellence, vitality and diversity of the arts in the United States are effectively presented to international audiences. Through a series of public diplomacy programs, participating U.S. artists and architects also reach out to broader and more diverse foreign audiences.

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