PUBLIC ART DUO

LaunchPAD

MARC FORNES/THEVERYMANY | BY LISA WOODS

In 2018 and 2019, I will be working with artist-architect Marc Fornes and his studio THEVERYMANY as part of Austin's Art in Public Places' (AIPP) LaunchPAD program. It's an amazing opportunity to get a behind-the-scenes look at how large-scale public artwork is created.

Marc Fornes became fascinated with materials research and geometric forms while working on an experimental carbon-fiber shell for Zaha Hadid Architects in the early 2000's. He studied mathematics and architecture and drew on that cumulative knowledge when he founded his own studio, Marc Fornes/ THEVERYMANY, in Brooklyn, New York. His 10-person team now applies computational protocols to complex curvilinear structures.

THEVERYMANY team is working on an upcoming piece for the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA), details of which will be made public in the next few months. See some of the other public art planned for the airport here: http://www.austintexas.gov/department/public-art-airport.

In February, I headed to the DUMBO neighborhood in Brooklyn for my first studio visit to THEVERYMANY. On the agenda: meet the team, give a brief presentation of my work, get a tour of the studio, see the latest iteration of the project for Austin, and develop a plan for working together for LaunchPAD.
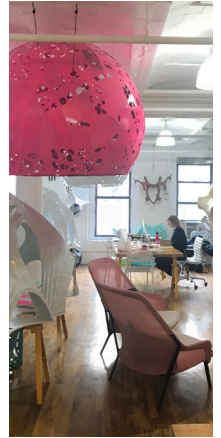

PRESENTING MY WORK

The presentation pushed me to look closely at my work and major influences to tease out the themes that currently interest me most. These themes include storytelling, participation, interaction, and using technology in novel ways. With these guiding principles, I was able to craft a presentation that represented my current direction as an artist. I engaged the entire studio in a participatory storytelling exercise to give the team a sense of how open-ended prompts can produce art.

OPEN CONVERSATION

Following my presentation, the remainder of the day was spent in conversation with Marc Fornes and Claudia Corcilius about the studio's evolution, their work, and the current project. By the afternoon, I had tons of notes on a broad range of topics relevant to public art. These are just a few of the subjects we covered: contract negotiation, client education, fabricator relationships, 3D renders, why failures are valuable, powder-coated metals, and communicating and negotiating color.
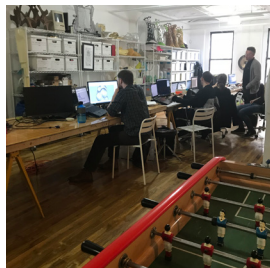
« The design process **depends on a team**, not one single person. Everyone is important, from the **designer** to the **coder** to the **fabricator**. »

INSIDE LOOK:

AUSTIN AIPP PROJECT
ABIA PARKING GARAGE AND
ADMIN BUILDING

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Launch**PAD**

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COMPATIBLE PARTNERSHIP

I commend the LaunchPAD Program selection process for a great fit! THEVERYMANY and I have a lot in common. We both believe in approaching art from a team perspective. We push for innovation—either in material and technology. We are tech-savvy—the studio uses lots of software to develop 3D models, new forms, and technical documentation. We both partner with experts to produce our work—fabricators and software engineers. And we are interested in the intersection of design, art, and technology.

LEARNING FROM ESTABLISHED ARTISTS

Much of what it means to be a professional public artist is just too nuanced to be learned in the classroom, studio, or from reading. With THEVERYMANY's honest and regular feedback, I hope to grow my technical skills and support the project while having a ring-side view onto the process.

I will focus on two directions—material explorations and crafting ideas to RFPs. These made sense for me at my stage and they are specific strengths of THEVERYMANY. I'm excited for my arts practice to evolve next year as I attend internal meetings and presentations with THEVERYMANY.

How I see LaunchPAD supporting my Austin art practice:

>> Opportunity to delve deeply into the intersection of art, architecture, and placemaking.

>> Exposure to new tools and ideas.

>> Up-close and personal access to a prominent art studio.

>> Opportunity to connect and collaborate with an expanded network of public artists.

As my LaunchPAD experience progresses, I'll share my experience with the hope that other artists will find something useful.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Lisa B. Woods is a digital artist who explores the fields of Installation Art, Expressive Technology, and Public Art.

Lisa draws on her background in experience design, sculpture, and graphic design, to create interactive installations with an emphasis on data, sculptural form, and collaborative storytelling. She earned her Masters in Design from California College of the Arts in 2013. Her thesis at CCA focused on exploring how digital platforms can enhance the creativity of everyday people. This work is rooted in a belief that everyone is creative and has a story to share.

When not designing, Lisa watches sci-fi anything and has a joy for fearless culinary improvisation.

AUSTIN ART IN PUBLIC PLACES

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