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Emma Wilcox: Where it Falls

April 13 – July 28, 2012

Friday, April 13: Reception 5:30-7:30pm



PHILADELPHIA: *Where it Falls* is an exhibition of new work by photographer **Emma Wilcox** (New York). Over the past seven years Wilcox has been writing texts using household flour and paint, in twelve-foot-high letters, on rooftops throughout Newark, NJ and photographing them via helicopter. By interjecting large-scale, text-based work into an urban environment, Wilcox examines issues of environmental justice, land usage, eminent domain and the role of individual meaning in the creation of local history. The photographic documentation of these interjections will form the core of her exhibition at The Print Center.

The series began with her own house, when she discovered she was about to lose it through the invocation of eminent domain to accommodate planned development. The rooftop texts are derived from interviews with people in affected neighborhoods, legal documents, signage (both active and defunct), and classic and modern poetry. Due to the prohibitive expense of chartering helicopter flights, Wilcox has only documented some of these actions, but remarkably she has noticed that her imagery has begun to appear on Google Earth. As it is updated, more and more of her work is documented, and has resulted in a new audience for the work. Previously, visual access to her interventions was limited primarily to her own photographs, but they are now viewable by the virtual public.

For this exhibition, Wilcox has photographed newly-made texts created on rooftops and vacant lots based on the original survey text of the City of Newark. In contrast to (and perhaps in repudiation of) the Google Earth images, Wilcox utilizes the gelatin silver print process, a chemical process now considered by many to be archaic, but here it is an ideal medium for depicting chemically tainted landscapes. The Print Center will produce an accompanying publication that will include an essay by noted author **Luc Sante** as well as related historical and contemporary materials. Several of Wilcox's *Forensic Landscapes*, an ongoing series of street scenes of Newark, will be coupled with her aerial photographs. The scenes shows easily overlooked details of urban sites and illustrate the perseverance of these spaces despite their almost overwhelming decay and neglect.

Emma Wilcox's most recent solo exhibitions were in 2010 at Gitterman Gallery, New York, NY and 2009 at Real Art Ways, Hartford, CT. She is the recipient of a New Jersey State Arts Council Fellowship for photography, the Camera Club of New York Residency, the Newark Museum Residency and was a core participant in Night School at the New Museum in 2008. She participated in *Emerge 7*, Aljira, Newark, NJ and *AIM 29*, Bronx Museum, Bronx, NY. She is also co-founder, with Evonne M. Davis, of Gallery Aferro, a Newark, NJ alternative space.

In conjunction with the exhibition a number of works by other artists whose work has been critical to Wilcox's practice will be installed. These works explore many of the same themes as Wilcox's, including the effects of urban planning, while also delving into the history of Newark back to its founding.

Where it Falls: Emma Wilcox will be on view April 13 – July 28, 2012. The opening reception is Friday, April 13 from 5:30-7:30pm, with a gallery talk by the artist at 5:30pm.

This exhibition is made possible by special project support from the Harpo Foundation, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, an anonymous donor, the Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance Creative Grant Program made possible by the JPMorgan Chase Foundation and the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Corporation as well as the generous cooperation of Gitterman Gallery, New York.