

METROPOLIS II BACKGROUND



(IMAGE CAPTION ON PAGE 4)

DESCRIPTION

Created by artist Chris Burden, *Metropolis II* (2010) is a complex, large-scale kinetic sculpture modeled after a fast-paced modern city. The armature of the piece is constructed of steel beams, forming an eclectic grid interwoven with an elaborate system of eighteen roadways, including a six-lane freeway, train tracks, and hundreds of buildings. 1,100 miniature toy cars speed through the city at 240 scale miles per hour on the specially designed plastic roadways. Every hour, the equivalent of approximately 100,000 cars circulates through the sculpture.

Situated in the center of the grid are three electrically powered conveyor belts, each studded with magnets at regular intervals. The magnets on the conveyor belt and those on the toy cars attract, enabling the cars to travel to the top of the sculpture without physical contact between the belt and cars. At the top, the cars are released one at a time and race

down the roadways, weaving in and out of the structure, simulating rapid traffic and congestion.

Metropolis II is on long-term loan to LACMA, thanks to the generosity of LACMA Trustee Nicolas Berggruen. Beginning January 14, 2012, the work will be on view on the first floor of the Broad Contemporary Art Museum (BCAM) and run on weekends during the scheduled times below.

Operating schedule

- Friday: 11:30 am-12:30 pm; 1:30-2:30 pm; 3:30-4:30 pm; 5:30-6:30 pm
- Saturday, Sunday: 10:30-11:30 am; 12:30-1:30 pm; 2:30-3:30 pm; 4:30-5:30 pm
- Weekdays: not operational

Key statistics

Dimensions 9'9" (H) x 28'3" (W) x 19'2" (D)
(297 cm x 862 cm x 584 cm)

Media 3 1/2 hp DC motors with motor controllers
1,100 custom-manufactured die-cast cars
13 HO-scale train sets with controllers and tracks
Steel, aluminum, shielded copper wire, copper sheet, brass, various plastics, assorted woods and manufactured wood products, Legos, Lincoln Logs, Dado Cubes, glass, ceramic and natural stone tiles, acrylic and oil-based paints, rubber, sundry adhesives

CHRIS BURDEN BIO

Chris Burden is a leading international artist who works and lives in Los Angeles. Over the past forty years, Burden has produced a multitude of assemblages, installations, scientific models, and kinetic and static sculptures, including *Urban Light* at LACMA.

He has performed and exhibited his work internationally, at institutions including Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; de Appel, Amsterdam; The Tate Museum, London; The Baltic Centre, Newcastle, England; The 48th Venice Biennale, Venice; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Conceptual Art, San Francisco; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; and the Whitney Museum of American Art Biennial, New York.

Burden produced his first mature works during the early 1970s. His work was characterized by the idea that the truly important, viable art of the future would not be with objects; the things that you could simply sell and hang on your wall. Instead art would be ephemeral and address political, social, environmental, and technological change. Earth, performance, body, video, computer, narrative, and conceptual art became the new mediums. Burden, with his shockingly simple, unforgettable, "here and now" performances shook the conventional art world during this period and took this new art form to its extreme.

The images of Burden that continue to resonate in public mind is of a young man who had himself shot (*Shoot*, 1971), electrocuted (*Doorway to Heaven*, 1973), cut (*Through the Night Softly*, 1973), drowned (*Velvet Water*, 1974), and locked up (*Five Day Locker Piece*, 1971).

Chris Burden was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1946. He moved to California in 1965 and obtained a BFA at Pomona College, Claremont, California in 1969, and later a MFA at the University of California, Irvine in 1971. He is also the recipient of numerous awards, including grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and a Guggenheim Fellowship. He taught at UCLA for twenty-six years and is currently a professor emeritus at UCLA.

CREDIT

Courtesy of The Nicolas Berggruen Charitable Foundation

About LACMA

Since its inception in 1965, LACMA has been devoted to collecting works of art that span both history and geography and represent Los Angeles's uniquely diverse population. Today, the museum features particularly strong collections of Asian, Latin American, European, and American art, as well as a contemporary museum on its campus. With this expanded space for contemporary art, innovative collaborations with artists, and an ongoing *Transformation* project, LACMA is creating a truly modern lens through which to view its rich encyclopedic collection.

Location and Contact: 5905 Wilshire Boulevard (at Fairfax Avenue), Los Angeles, CA, 90036 | 323 857-6000 | lacma.org

Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 11 am-5 pm; Friday: 11 am-8 pm; Saturday, Sunday: 10 am-7 pm; closed Wednesday

General Admission: Adults: \$15; students 18+ with ID and senior citizens 62+: \$10

Free General Admission: Members; children 17 and under; after 3 pm weekdays for L.A. County residents; second Tuesday of every month; Target Free Holiday Mondays

Image (page 1): Chris Burden, *Metropolis II*, 2010, Courtesy of The Nicolas Berggruen Charitable Foundation, © Chris Burden, photo © 2012 Museum Associates/LACMA

Press Contact: For additional information, contact LACMA Communications at press@lacma.org or 323 857-6522.

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