

MEDIA ALERT

DOUG AITKEN'S *MIRAGE DETROIT*

Opening October 10, 2018



Doug Aitken, *Mirage Detroit*, 2018; Courtesy of the Artist; Image by Doug Aitken Workshop.

Detroit, Michigan, September 11, 2018 – *Mirage Detroit* is a site-specific installation by Doug Aitken set within the turn-of-the-century former State Savings Bank in Downtown Detroit that opens October 10, 2018. This immersive, mirrored installation will reflect the entire space in which it is situated, activating this seminal historic building.

Behind the façade of the large, stone building, a set of stairs leads to an entryway. Opening the door leads into a vast interior space that spans nearly an entire block and is lined with classical columns. The center of the space is anchored with a century old bank vault. The building's architecture is intact, as if frozen in time and waiting to be re-awakened to transport a visitor into a completely new environment. Passing the vault, the visitor walks further into the darkened room where a choreographed series of lights illuminate *Mirage Detroit*. River rocks and earth crunch under foot as the lights reflect off the structure and beckon the viewer to enter the artwork.

Mirage Detroit is a sculpture in the form of an American suburban house. Its one-story, sprawling design creates a labyrinth of rooms and corridors. Every surface and detail of the

sculpture is mirrored, creating a human-scale kaleidoscope. It is a space that draws in and reflects everything that surrounds it, including the architecture of this archaic bank building. The contrast is extreme, with reflections of the aged architectural details juxtaposed with the marble floor returned to a raw state covered in earth and stones. It is a constantly shifting landscape that incorporates the organic and inorganic, reflects the past, and questions the future.

Lighting is a carefully considered element within the space. The building will be void of natural light, with its windows darkened, while carefully choreographed white lights will illuminate the interior. The lights will gradually shift sequentially along the architecture of the building, and their reflections on *Mirage Detroit*'s surface will change constantly. *Mirage Detroit*'s lighting is the result of the collaboration between Doug Aitken and renowned experimental lighting designer Andi Watson, who is known for his pioneering lightshows and for his long-term partnership with the band Radiohead.

The State Savings Bank, completed in 1900 and located in the heart of Downtown Detroit, has been unoccupied for decades. *Mirage Detroit* will mark some of the first public open access to the building. Behind the façade of the unmarked, monolithic building, *Mirage Detroit* exists outside of the traditional museum and gallery system. It is an artwork that embraces the urban American landscape in new ways. Unlike frequently used contemporary images of Detroit showing decayed and abandoned spaces, the State Bank appears the opposite, as if preserved in time. Embedded within the city's landscape, *Mirage Detroit* speaks to the history of Detroit while looking towards its future.

"In many ways, *Mirage* will become its surroundings," says Library Street Collective owner Anthony Curis, "It will reflect and intensify one of the city's greatest historical and cultural contributions - its grand architecture."

Mirage Detroit will also host a calendar of soon-to-be-announced cultural events throughout the duration of its stay, including educational programs, musical performances, and conversations open to the public in partnership with organizations like Cranbrook Academy of Art and Art Museum, Museum of Modern Art Detroit (MOCAD) and College for Creative Studies.

Mirage Detroit is produced by Detroit-based art gallery Library Street Collective and generously supported by Bedrock and the Quicken Loans Community Fund.

DOUG AITKEN

Utilizing a wide array of artistic approaches, Doug Aitken's immersive works lead us into a world where time, space, and memory are fluid concepts. His work has been featured in exhibitions around the world, in such institutions as the Whitney Museum of American Art, The Museum of Modern Art, the Vienna Secession, the Serpentine Gallery in London, and the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. Aitken earned the International Prize at the Venice Biennale for the installation "electric earth", the 2012 Nam June Paik Art Center Prize, and the 2013 Smithsonian American Ingenuity Award: Visual Arts.

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MEDIA CONTACTS:

Allison Therrien | atherrien@fitzandco.art | 646.589.0921

Meg Huckaby | mhuckaby@fitzandco.art | 646.589.0928