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Cassandra Coblentz
with Jean Shin and Brian Ripel

SMoCA
scottsdale museum of contemporary art

JEAN SHIN & BRIAN RIPEL UNLOCKING

October 9, 2010 – January 2, 2011

Organized by the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art with funding from SmithGroup, Paul Giancola and Janis Leonard Design Associates

7380 East Second Street | Scottsdale, Arizona 85251

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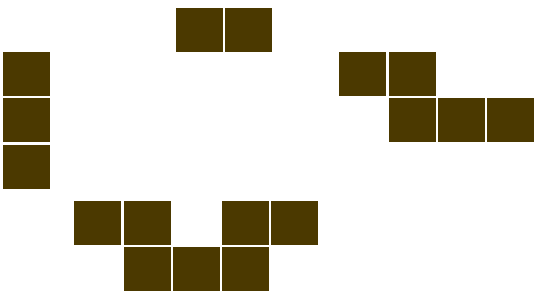


FOREWORD

The Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art (SMoCA) has a distinguished history of commissioning artists to create new works for presentation in the museum. Many acclaimed artists, such as Pae White, Byron Kim and Lyle Ashton Harris, have installed new works in the galleries in collaboration with the museum, its staff and community. Works of art have provoked complex dialogues about social and political issues and aesthetic concerns particular to the Southwest. *Jean Shin & Brian Ripel: Unlocking* continues the museum's mission to present relevant new works of contemporary art to our community for their engagement and consideration.

Cassandra Coblentz, curator of the exhibition, writes in her essay that Shin and Ripel have engaged our community in the making of their new installation in multiple ways. A large proportion of the 2,000 lbs. of keys collected for the project came from individuals and companies in the Phoenix area; Mark Tarter of the Hillman Group alone provided nearly 20,000 keys. Bollinger Atelier, MarZee Water Jet Services in Arizona and Softlab in New York helped to fabricate important components of the installation. Volunteers from Arizona State University's graduate program in art, community volunteers, interns and SMoCA staff all assisted in the documentation, positioning and presenting of the keys in *Lost Vista*. Even more participants helped to make the *Key Chain* drawing that recorded the relationships among people who share identical keys.

Many others outside our community have directly and indirectly influenced the shape of this project. Both professors, Shin and Ripel teach—among other courses—drawing classes for both art and architecture students. This project allowed them the opportunity to connect through their drawing practices with their drawing students. Ripel also teaches a design studio that focuses on constructed or fabricated

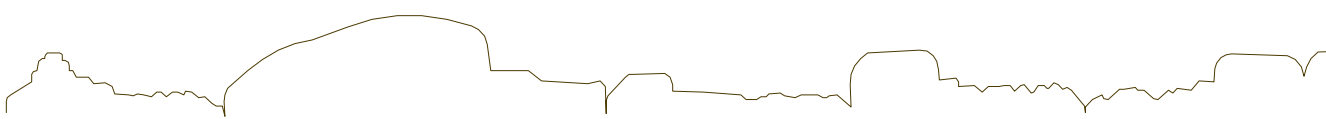
landscapes; it had particular resonance for the project. Ideas developed in and stimulated by the classroom have, according to the artists, “percolated into *Unlocking* in a really pleasing way.”

Although Shin and Ripel were completely in control of the artistic process, final products and presentation, this installation was rooted in a participatory process and we are grateful to all of the people, businesses and institutions for their help. Jean Shin and Brian Ripel and their team worked extremely hard to produce a beautiful installation that is awe-inspiring for both its meticulousness and its grandeur. The vision and determination of Cassandra Coblentz allowed this project to come into being. She is a consummate problem-solver, incredible negotiator and a model collaborator. SMoCA is indeed fortunate to have such a talented curator on staff. Thanks to Shin, Ripel and Coblentz—an all-star team.

The museum, like this project, depends on an even larger group of collaborators to accomplish its mission. Generous funders such as SmithGroup, Paul Giancola and Janis Leonard Design Associates assisted in fundamental and vital ways to help realize this project. The Scottsdale Cultural Council, its board, and its President, Bill Banchs, all encourage the museum’s commitment to commission new works of art and, most importantly, to focus on our task. The City of Scottsdale supports the council and its divisions, and the museum is fortunate to be located in a city that recognizes the value of creativity as expressed through the arts. If there is a final “key” to this project, it would be Scottsdale, a place where people gather to create art, beauty and community.

Tim Rodgers, Ph.D.

Director



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I first met Jean Shin and Brian Ripel in Brooklyn in the spring of 2001 at a brunch the morning after a big rain storm. They had been up early combing the streets to collect all the broken umbrellas discarded as worthless by soggy, time-strapped New Yorkers. As they explained how the colorful fabrics and metal armatures would be used to make a sculptural installation, I was struck by how ingenious this was and by how diligent they seemed in their efforts to find as many umbrellas as possible. Now, having worked with Shin and Ripel on *Unlocking*, I can say that their ingenuity, diligence and determination have only increased. Their vision, creativity and amazing work ethic are the hallmarks of their individual and combined successes. They brought tremendous integrity to every phase of this project and inspired everyone involved to aspire to their standards of excellence.

This ambitious exhibition was possible because the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art has an amazingly dedicated staff. I want to thank Tim Rodgers, who started as director at the Museum just as this project was taking form, for his confidence and support. Lauren O'Connell joined our curatorial staff just as *Unlocking* was moving into full production and installation mode; her amazing people skills, keen instinct, organizational vision and hard work were invaluable. Registrar Pat Evans also played a key role in the success of this project. SMoCA's fantastic installation crew Laura Best, Nicholas Quint, Brian Cummings and Dustin Mc Bride under the guidance of Jes Gettler and Neil Borowicz all contributed mightily to the exhibition. We were fortunate to have designer Diana Bergquist who brought her impeccable design sense and creativity to the graphic materials in the gallery as well as this publication. It is always a pleasure to work with editor Terry Ann R. Neff and I thank her as well for her contribution to the exhibition and book.

On the production end, Tom Bollinger and the rest of the staff at Bollinger Atelier patiently helped us to develop the optimal fabrication strategy and then skillfully executed a challenging casting job in the heat of an Arizona summer. When we set out to collect 2,000 lbs. of keys, we never imagined our good fortune in encountering Mark Tarter of the Hillman Group, whose generous donation of close to 20,000 keys made an essential contribution to this project. We also thank MarZee Water Jet Services and Softlab.

The extensive efforts of a stellar group of interns and volunteers facilitated the realization of *Unlocking*. We thank SMoCA intern Christine Htoon for beginning the process of collecting, measuring, cataloguing and labeling thousands of keys; Laura Lundquist patiently continued this endeavor in addition to enduring excruciating heat documenting the foundry process and contributing to the production of *Lost Vista*. In Jean Shin's studio, Katherine Leonetti, Brittany Mendez, Jessica Tsai and Tiffany Ulrich likewise labored to document the thousands of keys received there. We also thank Suchita Shah, Jin Won Lee and Jess Ramsay for digital support on this project. ASU graduate student volunteers Elise Deringer, Brooke Heuts, Amy Masters, Ann Morton and Kelsey Viola along with SMoCA's Associate Curator of Education Laura Hales graciously assisted with the final assembly of *Lost Vista*. Special thanks also go to Matthew Moore and Adam Murray for their generous technical support and assistance.

Lastly, we thank all the individuals who donated their old keys for *Lost Vista* and the numerous Scottsdale Cultural Council staff members and our extended community who participated in *Key Chain*. We hope this interactive process of working has been as valuable an experience for everyone who participated as it has been for all of us who had the privilege of reaching out.

CONVERSATION

JEAN SHIN AND BRIAN RIPEL IN CONVERSATION WITH CASSANDRA COBLENTZ:

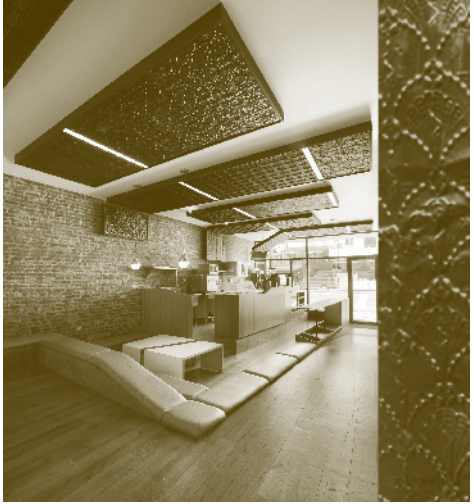
The following text is the result of cross-country email conversations between *Unlocking* curator Cassandra Coblentz, based in Scottsdale, Arizona, and the artist Jean Shin and architect Brian Ripel in Brooklyn, New York.

Cassandra Coblentz: Having followed Jean Shin's work for years, I initially set out to invite her to do a project for the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art. As our conversations progressed, and the idea developed, it became clear how integral Brian Ripel's role would be in this project. I was thrilled at the prospect of working with you both as collaborators.

Working with artist teams in the past has helped me understand the uniqueness of each collaboration and the importance of the strengths and sensibilities of each member of the team. As individuals, what do you believe each of you brings to the collaboration? Do you see this project as part of a trajectory of concepts and interests evolving in your individual practices?

Jean Shin and Brian Ripel, *Glass Block*, 2001–2006. Empty wine bottles and silicone, 96 x 96 x 12 inches. Commissioned by the Museum of Glass, Tacoma, Washington, for Permanent Collection. Photo: Lara Swimmer.

Jean Shin: The best way to address that question is to discuss the nature of our collaboration, which has been ongoing for nearly ten years. When working together to generate the concept, it's great to have critical dialogue and push ideas beyond one's familiar zone. In this way, we both draw upon aspects of our independent practices, but ultimately challenge and expand them.



RSVP Architecture Studio, Root Hill Cafe, Brooklyn, NY, 2008. Photo: Seong Kwon.

Brian Ripel: Working with Jean introduces a whole series of spatial and conceptual issues that are different from those I deal with every day in my built work. The way in which Jean and I may define an experience of space with minimal means is all highly architectural, but achieved through very different strategies: lines on a wall, projections, brass tiles set upon the floor. This project has also involved an exploration of materiality that was consistent with some of my built projects, but brought to a level of engagement that architectural practice rarely permits.

Jean Shin, *Unraveling*, 2006–2009. Yarn from sweaters collected from the Asian-American art community, dimensions variable. Installation at Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., 2009. Photo: Seong Kwon.

JS: There are a number of similarities in how we each approach our work. Frequently my large installations operate on an architectural scale, so it feels natural for me to collaborate closely with an architect. Moreover, the duration of my projects and the elaborate process of their creation have an architectural timeline that is quite foreign to the traditional notion of an artist relying on immediacy and intuition. Thankfully, Brian and I share very similar aesthetic and spatial sensibilities, so we can agree quickly on how something should ultimately look and be experienced. Our conceptual concerns overlap nicely as well, although we may approach that common goal a bit differently, focusing on particular aspects of the project that interest us and are our strengths. Ultimately, we are each other's harshest critics, but the most supportive as well. The intensity of this kind of relationship is crucial to the success of our collaboration.

In some ways, our collaborative process extends to the relationship we have with the institutions that we work with. It has been really important for us to bring SMoCA into the process from the very beginning and create an open dialogue with you about our concepts for

the show. Your insights and questions at every stage from proposal to production have challenged and strengthened the work in a positive way. The partnership has really intensified over these past several months. You and others on staff became very hands-on with the collection and inventory of the keys as well as coordinating and documenting the work done by the local fabricators. Producing the work together is a shared responsibility and it's great when a curator/institution not only embraces the creative process, but takes a degree of ownership of it. How do you view that experience?

Ray Mine, Hayden, Arizona, 2010.

CC: One of the things I love most about what I do is having access to artists' working processes; each one is different and teaches me something new. I am always inspired by the challenge of figuring out how to bring an abstract concept into realization. I see my role as a platform for artists to have the opportunity to make their visions and ideas concrete; if in the process I can help strengthen those ideas, all the better. I think of myself as catalyst more than producer or even instigator.

Speaking of instigating, how does a project normally begin for you? Does it start with a material, a specific location, or a context? How do you arrive at the decision to work with a certain material?

JS: Every project has a different starting point. There is no defined or single methodology but rather a series of ideas that live with you over time. In the case of *Unlocking*, there was an initial fascination with the key as an object. For years, I had a growing collection of keys in my studio.

BR: Translating the object of the key into a drawing really started the conversation about the project's content. When I traced the profile of the keys on my own key chain, I started to see how this drawing was a portrait of my life—a map of the spaces I inhabit, not through the properties of those places but rather through the contours of keys that allow me to access them. This idea lived with us for over a year without our knowing where it would lead.

JS: During the site visit to Scottsdale, I began to see a link between the cut profiles of the keys and the physical landscape of Arizona. Not only is there a visual connection, but I later learned that copper, a component in the brass key, was being mined in the surrounding mountains. Copper mining shaped Arizona's history and its social, environmental and economic impact still reverberate today. When we choose a material, it's not only the physical qualities of the objects that appeal to us, but equally its layers of meaning and connections to everyday experiences.

BR: The object is a vehicle or placeholder for a larger set of relationships about places past or present, people and social dynamics. We see the two works in the show as addressing two opposing realities: *Key Chain* is about the intimacy of shared access while *Lost Vista* addresses estrangement due to denied access.

CC: To me it seems that the process of creating this installation has been as important as the finished product. Would you agree? Is this something you intend? Is it typical for you?

BR: Absolutely. From the acquisition of raw material through the various experiments in fabrication, we were always more interested in the exploration and integrity of our process than in some pre-defined final product. No one could predict how 2,000 lbs. of mixed keys melted and recast would look. Similarly, the "topographies" in our drawing and sculpture are entirely dependent upon a collection of individuals who happened to be intrigued enough to participate in our project. Inside this approach is a belief that openness and diversity will ultimately produce an unexpected beauty with resonance for others.

CC: Please talk about this transition from working with objects alone to combining objects with media components and specifically with regard to this project. Would you say that you are simulating a mediated space based on a concrete tangible object?

BR: We were initially fascinated by the gallery's former life as a movie house. Often we know an idea is working when it begins to operate on multiple levels. This was the case for the projected landscape. We love the idea that our piece contains echoes of the space's history.

Jean Shin, *Everyday Monuments*, 2009. Sports trophies, painted, cast and sculpted resins and projections, approx. 88 x 60 x 540 inches. Photo: Seong Kwon.

JS: Through my installations, I've been drawn toward photography and video as a means of projecting imagery at a grand scale that fills the room and yet captures the ephemeral, intimate nature of everyday objects. The projection is an important component of this installation in that it takes the focus away from the object and asks viewers to interact with the piece at the scale of their own body.

CC: How do you see the specific environment of Arizona being reflected in this piece? Would you consider this installation site-specific?

BR: We think of *Unlocking* as being very site-specific at multiple scales. For example, the floor installation started as a response to architect Will Bruder's floor grid that carries throughout the museum. This module then began to suggest a relationship to the larger grid that forms the urban pattern of the Phoenix/Scottsdale area. The surrounding landscape, both at a topographical and mineral level, further rooted the piece in this locale.

JS: Perhaps most significant is the specificity of the individuals in the community that we engage. This show in many ways looks at the process of how our network of relationships in New York expands and merges with this extraordinary new set of connections here and beyond as a result of SMoCA's invitation.

CC: How would you describe your notion of community? Does this evolve with each new project? Or is it specific to each project?

JS: Community is not site-specific or necessarily limited by locale. I believe community is what you build. A number of individuals become loosely connected and activated by something they share; this forms a community. Through our projects, a diverse group of people come together to assist us in the making of the work.

CC: This has definitely been true for *Unlocking*. A unique community of individuals who would otherwise have no association now share something by having participated in this project.

Jean Shin and Brian Ripel, *Lost Vista*, installation view, 2010.

UNLOCKING
by CASSANDRA COBLENTZ

In this socially networked age, our sense of community has shifted. Today, we have access to the events, images and comings and goings of one another's lives through the easy click of an acceptance button. We increasingly grant people entrance to our lives in what previously might have felt like an invasion of privacy.[1] When community can be expanded across the vastness of the World Wide Web, what happens to our ability to connect in concrete as opposed to virtual ways? Where does community reside when we can so flippantly reach out to one another with a quick Tweet, or tell thousands of "friends" where we are with Facebook "places?" What kinds of communities can transcend this blurring of boundaries between the virtual and the actual?

In *Unlocking*, artist Jean Shin and architect Brian Ripel have explored an object, the key, from a range of perspectives. The key represents above all a physical connection to real space and to those we trust to share access to the spaces we inhabit. Typical of Shin and Ripel's work, this singular object also serves as a tool to connect and engage with individual participants and establish a unique community around the creation of the project.

Writer Nicholas Bourriard defined the kind of community that can evolve out of an exhibition in his seminal text "Relational Aesthetics":

> *An exhibition is a privileged place where instant communities…can be established: depending on the degree of audience participation demanded by the artist, the nature of the works on show and the models of sociability that are represented or suggested, an exhibition can generate a particular "domain of exchanges." And we must judge that "domain of exchanges" on the basis of aesthetic criteria, or in other words by analyzing the coherence of its form, and then the symbolic value of the "world" it offers us or the image of human relations that it reflects.*[2]

While Shin and Ripel's *Unlocking* is firmly rooted in the formal traditions of sculpture and installation art, Bourriard's description of the kind of community that can evolve out of an exhibition is relevant here.

Shin and Ripel explicitly drew from a range of art-historical precedents that combine formal and representational aspects of their practices with an increased focus on process and participation.

In the two pieces that comprise the exhibition, *Lost Vista* and *Key Chain*, Shin and Ripel deconstructed the key for its material and social value and revealed the relationships between its formal attributes and its function in society. *Lost Vista* combines a floor sculpture with a large-scale video projection that fills an entire back wall of the gallery. The viewer becomes enveloped in a wall-to-wall projected image that emulates the Arizona desert but is actually a simulated landscape created by videotaping the thousands of keys set into tiles arranged on the gallery floor. This map, modeled after the topography surrounding the Phoenix Metro area, is barely two inches high. The viewer, presented with an extreme shift in scale—a bird's-eye view standing over the tiles and a frontal view of an immersive video projection—simultaneously dominates and is dominated by the image.

The materials establish a further confluence. The tiles are brass, primarily from actual keys melted down and re-formed through a highly skilled foundry process of sand casting. They support careful arrangements of nearly 8,000 old keys donated by people for the project. Each key was counted, measured and inserted into a digitally designed schematic pattern. Following this digital pattern, slots for each key were water-jet cut into the tiles and then meticulously hand-fitted with specific keys to create the landscape.

The fact that this topography is literally made of keys that individuals once used to access spaces in their lives imbues the sculpture with nostalgia—a communal sense of loss or broken connections with the spaces we inhabit and, by extension, the physical landscape itself. It suggests a shift away from an analog era in which space was measured and understood, a concrete world of tangible objects rather than a virtual space constructed of digital imagery.

The experience of coming to realize that the video projection is a digital representation of the concrete sculpture on the floor also makes the viewer aware of his or her own perceptual experience of the work. This awareness of physical experience that Shin and Ripel evoke continues a historical trajectory that arose with notions of temporality and theatricality explored by Minimalist artists in the late 1960s and 1970s.[3] Building on the conception of embodied perception as a means of completing the meaning of an artwork, the viewer of *Lost Vista* mediates the disjuncture in his or her perception of the two components of the piece. As in the

Minimalist model, recognizing this disjuncture removes the perceiving subject from a purely passive aesthetic experience and creates an active consciousness of one's own cognition.[4]

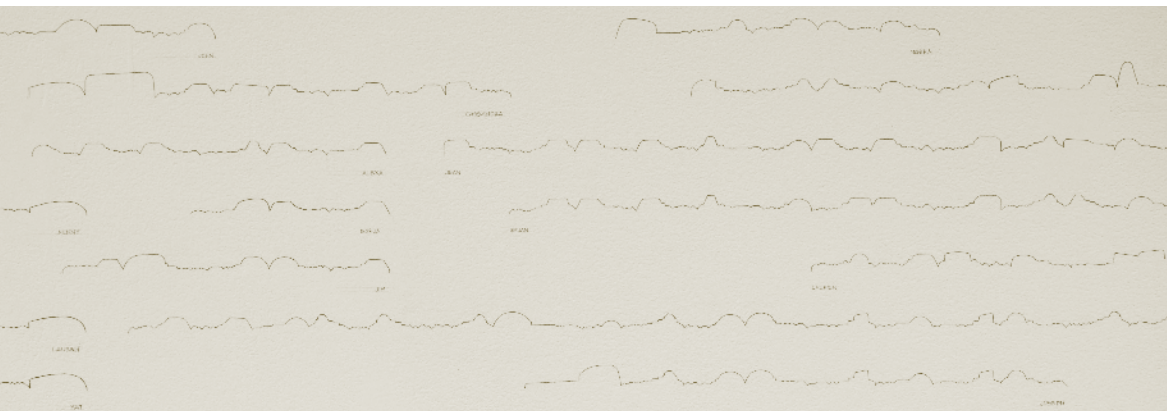
Shin and Ripel further acknowledged the connection to Minimalism in the form of the cast tiles themselves—a nod to Carl Andre's iconic industrial metal floor sculptures. Building on Marcel Duchamp's infamous concept of Readymades, Minimalist artists such as Andre, Donald Judd and Richard Serra, among many others, championed industrial methods and materials as a way to question notions of authorship, mass production of goods and in turn the power of the military-industrial complex. Keys stand out in relation to other industrially produced objects in that they start out in mass quantities of identical shapes and forms, but are subsequently transformed into unique objects. Both the processes employed and the visual experience of the end result hold meaning for Shin and Ripel. They explore the contradiction between mass production and unique singularity in the objects used to create their work and the representational significance of their fabrication processes: digital rendering, industrial fabrication and manual labor.

The Red Cliff (detail), Chinese, Yuan dynasty or later, about 14th century. Ink and color on silk, 12 $^{3}/_{16}$ x 50 $^{11}/_{16}$ inches. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Keith McLeod Fund, 59.960. Photograph © 2010 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

In *Lost Vista*, there is literally and figuratively an aesthetic/conceptual melding that at once draws upon yet consciously rejects fundamental notions of Minimalism by embracing the representational potential of the materials the artists worked with. According to art historian and writer Peter Osborne, Minimalism was an "experimental withdrawal of art from perceptual values."[5] Shin and Ripel, however, have deliberately created an aesthetic experience as well as sought to elicit a cognitive awareness in the viewers.

This perception is rooted in the viewer's experience of disjuncture or fragmentation; the representational association with the landscape is equally important.

Key Chain presents a more abstracted engagement with the formal elements of the key. The expansive wall drawing featuring only their profiles involved a different kind of community participation. The piece documents a chain of relationships represented by the keys people share with one another. It originated with a SMoCA key given to Shin and Ripel and grew to encompass a network of shared keys when individuals were invited to submit outlines of all the keys on their personal key rings. The artists translated these drawings into continuous horizontal lines composed in a specifically sequenced stacking cluster. In its totality, the drawing simultaneously evokes the silhouette of the Arizona landscape's horizon line and references the flattened vertical expanse of space in a 14th century Chinese landscape painting.



Jean Shin and Brian Ripel, *Key Chain* (detail), 2010.

Key Chain involved more personal connectedness than *Lost Vista.* Participants were invited because of close, trusted relationships. Furthermore, they agreed to share personal information with the artists, and by extension, the public. They took the time to provide the data to be transcribed and transformed into the resulting communal imagery. The meticulously documented process is available within the exhibition on the project's blog.

Shin and Ripel view the transposed line drawings as a portrait of each individual. Together, they offer a larger portrait of the community emanating from the project itself—the artists and the museum staff. The initial drawing was made in time for the

opening, but that drawing and thus the connections have been allowed to expand throughout the run of the exhibition. In this decision, Shin and Ripel gave primacy to reaching out and establishing a network so that the wall drawing is the outcome of a process. It is not surprising to learn that Shin worked on a series of drawings for Sol LeWitt's retrospective exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 2000. The influence of Le Witt's emphasis on process and questioning of the artist and viewer's subjectivity is apparent in *Key Chain*.[6] His use of contracts to determine execution privileged the concept above the physical form of the artwork. As in a Le Witt contract, Shin and Ripel made the final form of *Key Chain* entirely dependent on people following a system that they established, rather than determining the aesthetic itself. The exchange between the participants and the artists is primary.

With audience participation and levels of engagement and collaboration running through its duration, *Unlocking* has been a dynamic project. Shin and Ripel's combination of media imagery, a blog, sculpture and drawing offers varied experiences at different moments and underscores the temporal aspect of the creative process. The blog facilitates an ongoing dialogue, a collaborative relationship with the project's participants. The process of exchanging information makes the viewer a significant contributor to the meaning of the work. This increasingly widespread tendency toward social practices in contemporary art is one that Shin and Ripel embrace cautiously—intrigued by its communal potential yet wary of its utopian claims.

Art historian and critic Hal Foster questions the idealism at play in this increased focus on interactivity and community participation in contemporary art:

> *Perhaps discursivity and socialbility are in the foreground of art today because they are scarce elsewhere…It is as though the very idea of community has taken on a utopian tinge. Even an art audience cannot be taken for granted but must be conjured up every time, which might be why contemporary exhibitions often feel like remedial work in socialization: come and play, talk, learn with me. If participation appears threatened in other spheres, its privilege in art might be compensatory—a pale part-time substitute.*[7]

The precise kind of collaboration Shin and Ripel enlist is important to note in this respect. For them, audience and collaborators are not necessarily the same. Participation in their project exists on carefully considered levels of engagement ranging from specific and labor-intensive (tracing one's keys, measuring, charting and fitting keys into specific slots) to brief and noncommittal

(donating an old key) to observational (commenting in the blog). Shin and Ripel openly rework the material and information they receive; thereby questioning the often presumed utopian concept in much socially engaged contemporary art. By challenging the pretense of democratic collaboration, the artists also question the kind of agency collaborators have and how it is played out in the finished work. Shin and Ripel retain ultimate aesthetic control, yet do so with the intention to create a carefully conceived aesthetic experience for their viewer, the perceiving subject, within the gallery setting.

This revision of theoretical precedents hinges primarily on the notion of the aesthetic or representational potential of an artwork. According to Osborne:

> *That [the late 1960s] was a time when the subtraction or suspension of the aesthetic—and in particular, the visual—had a critical resonance associated with both its novelty and a broader cultural-political context; a time when antiaesthetic strategies were legible and had a certain productive force….Today, aesthetic indifference is no longer enough on its own to temporalize a work. Indeed on its own, what used to be thought of as "the look of no art" (which is now also the look of art) courts the danger of artistic indifference.*[8]

Shin and Ripel are not interested in indifference—they intend their work to be evocative because of how it looks and what it is made of. They aim most of all to get people to think about the material objects we possess and how they connect us. This awareness can come through participating in creating the work or by discovering this connection through its aesthetic, formal or representational impact.

Shin and Ripel move fluidly through these conceptual paradigms, as they do with the shifting meaning of material objects in history. Grappling with concrete things and spaces in an age of virtuality and digital predominance, they bring a keen sensitivity to our contemporary need for multiple points of entry. Similarly, on a formal level, they intentionally combine digital and industrial practices and technologies as tools, aware of the implications their processes have in relation to their imminently obsolete subject. The key fobs of the future offer connection or access through code—a shift that to some signals a loss of security or privacy. But, perhaps code is enough, especially if it enables us to build and connect more easily: after all, *Unlocking* essentially started with a posting on SMoCA's Facebook page asking people to donate their old keys.

[1] Steve Lohr, “How Privacy Vanishes Online,” New York Times, March 17, 2010, p. A1.

[2] Nicholas Bourriaud, *Esthétique relationelle, Les presses du réel, Dijon*, 1998; English edition: *Relational Aesthetics*, 2002. In Claire Bishop, ed., Participation (London: Whitechapel; Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2006), p. 162.

[3] This conception of theatricality was most famously originally conceived as a critique of Minimal art by Michael Fried in “Art and Objecthood,” in Gregory Battcock, ed., *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology* (New York: E. P.Dutton, 1968). Grant H. Kester describes Fried's argument: “Theatrical art communicates to viewers through formal cues that make them conscious of the fact that their ostensibly transcendent encounter is in fact highly conditional–that aesthetic meaning is not imminent in the physical object but is created through and by their very situatedness in space and time before it.” In *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004), p. 47.

[4] Many theorists and scholars have written about conceptions of time, perception and subjectivity in relation to late 20th-century art. Peter Osborne summarizes these ideas well when he writes: “In Kant’s aesthetics we thus find the first intimation of three ideas about time that subsequently become central to modernism and twentieth century European philosophy alike: the idea that modern art involves a distillation or purification of the feeling of transitoriness (Baudelaire), the idea that time comes to the subject from death (Heidegger), and the idea that time “signifies a fault or fracture in the *I* and a passivity in the self” (Deleuze). Peter Osborne, “Starting Up All Over Again: Time and Existence in Some Conceptual Art of the 1960s,” in Peter Eleey, *The Quick and The Dead* (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 2009), p. 93.

[5] Ibid., p. 93.

[6] Le Witt wrote in *Artforum* in 1967: “No matter what form it may finally have it must begin with an idea. It is the process of conception and realization with which the artist is concerned. Once given physical reality by the artist the work is open to the perception of all, including the artist. (I use the word perception to mean the apprehension of the sense data, the objective understanding of the idea, and simultaneously a subjective interpretation of both.) The work of art can be perceived only after it is completed.” Sol LeWitt, “Paragraphs on Conceptual Art,” *Artforum*, October 1967, Vol.5, No.10, p. 79–83.

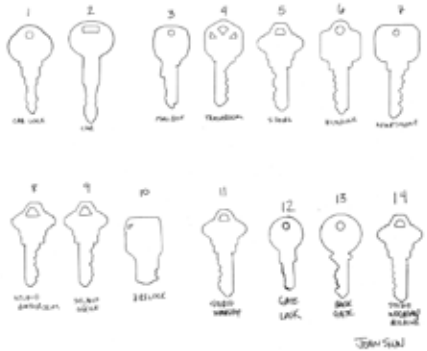
[7] Hal Foster, “Arty Party” (author’s original title: “Chat Rooms”), *London Review of Books*, December 4, 2004, pp. 21–22, in Bishop, p. 194.

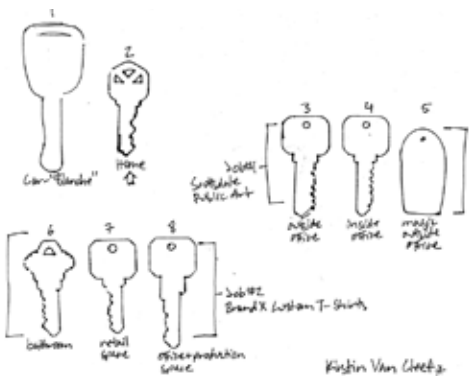
[8] Osborne, p. 103.

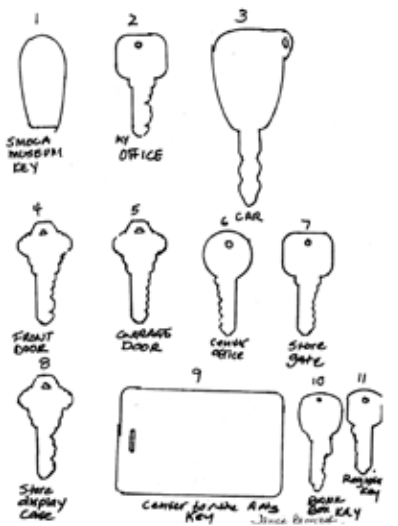
Above and below left: documentation of initial site visit to the Phoenix Metro Area and surrounding landscape. Below right: Carlota Mine, Miami, Arizona, 2010.

Below: Collection of donated keys.

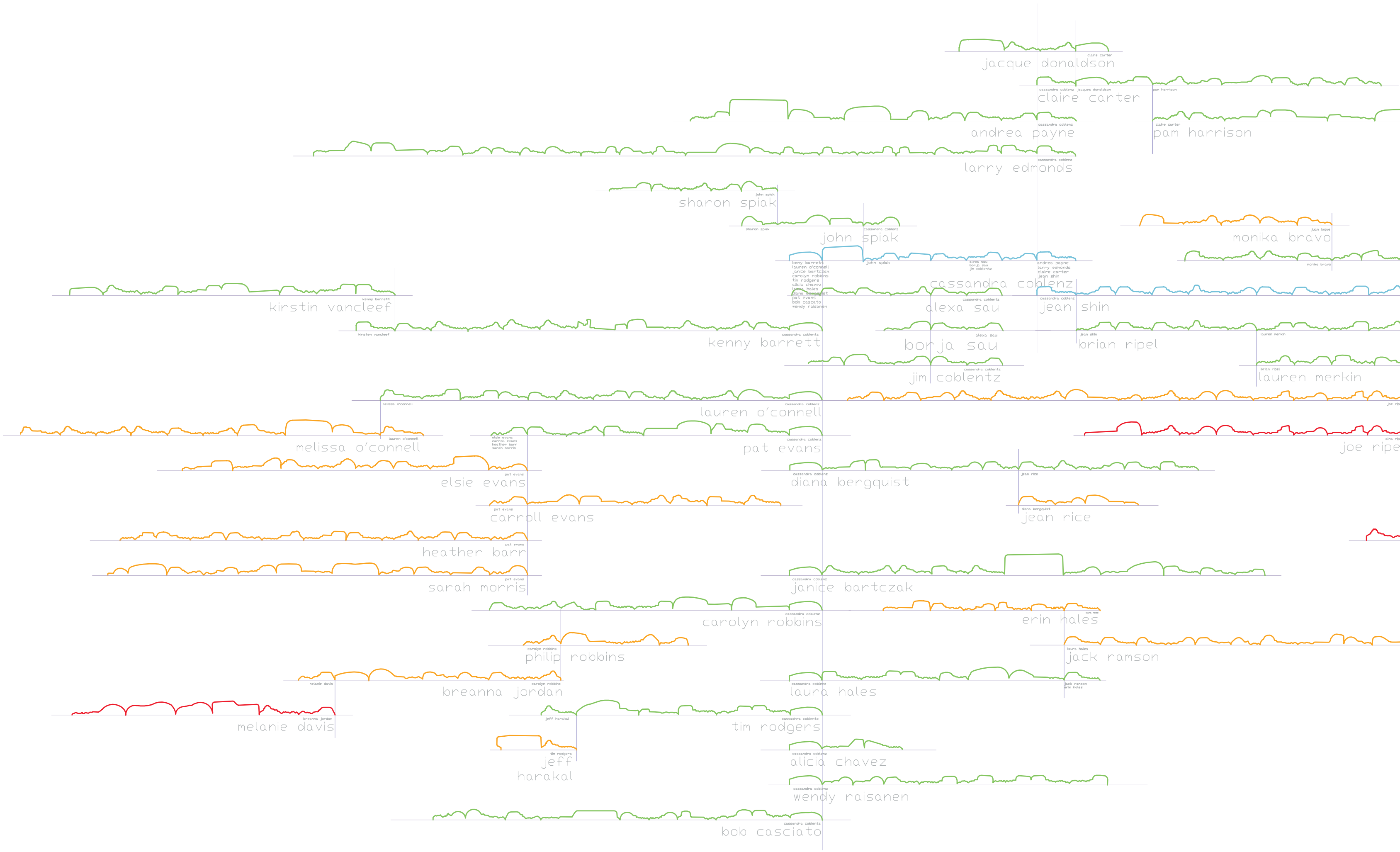
Jean Shin's keys.

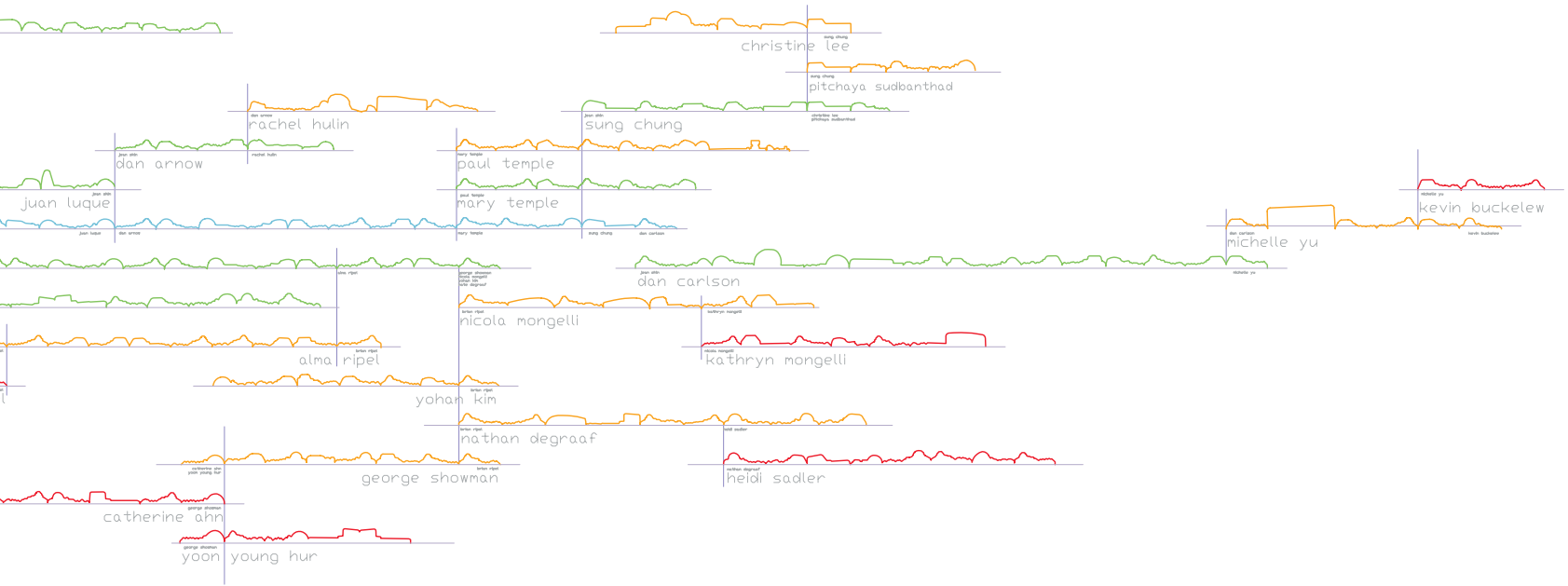






Key tracings submitted by *Key Chain* participants.


jacque donaldson
claire carter
andrea payne
pam harrison
larry edmonds
sharon spiak
john spiak
monika bravo
cassandra coblenz
kirstin vancleef
alexa sau
jean shin
kenny barrett
borja sau
brian ripel
jim coblentz
lauren merkin
lauren o'connell
melissa o'connell
pat evans
joe ripe
elsie evans
diana bergquist
carroll evans
jean rice
heather barr
sarah morris
janice bartczak
carolyn robbins
erin hales
philip robbins
jack ramson
breanna jordan
laura hales
melanie davis
tim rodgers
jeff harakal
alicia chavez
wendy raisanen
bob casciato

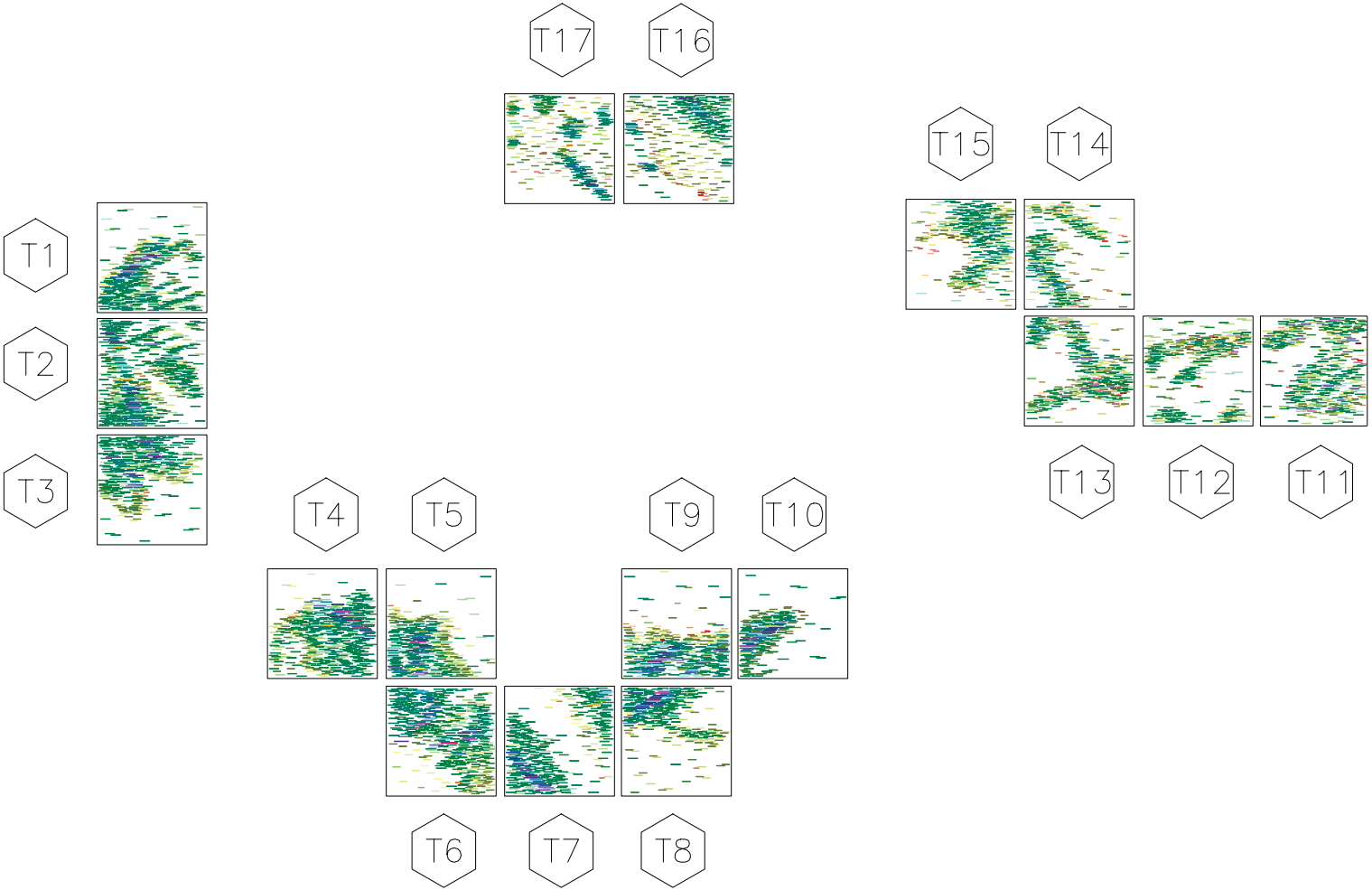


Digital drawing for *Key Chain* as of November 1, 2010, showing layout of participants based upon shared keys.

Brian Ripel working on *Key Chain* using laser-cut templates.

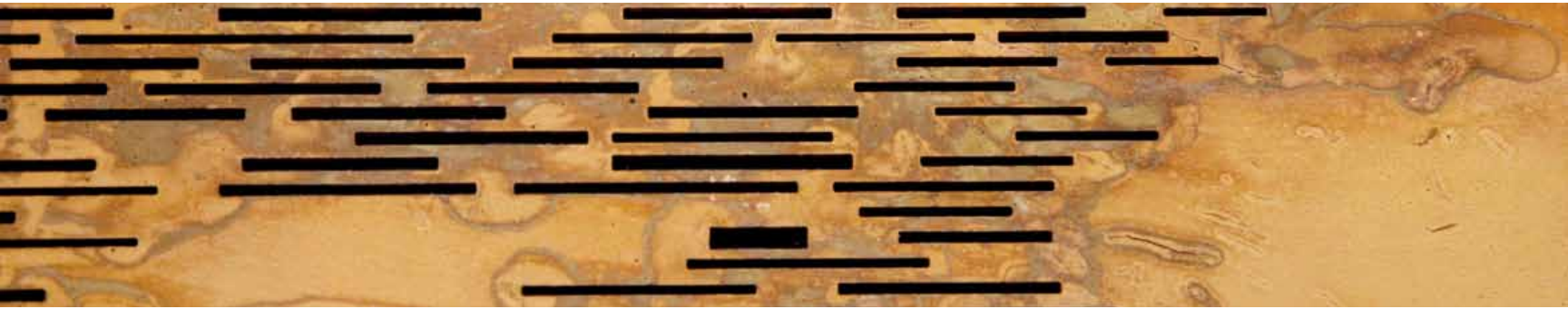
Jean Shin and Brian Ripel, *Key Chain*, installation view, 2010. Graphite on drywall, dimensions variable.

Key Chain (detail).



Digital drawing for *Lost Vista* indicating placement on the gallery floor relative to the topography of the mountains surrounding the Phoenix Metro Area.

Above left: keys melting in crucible at Bollinger Atelier, Tempe, Arizona. Above right: molten brass being poured into sand cast molds.

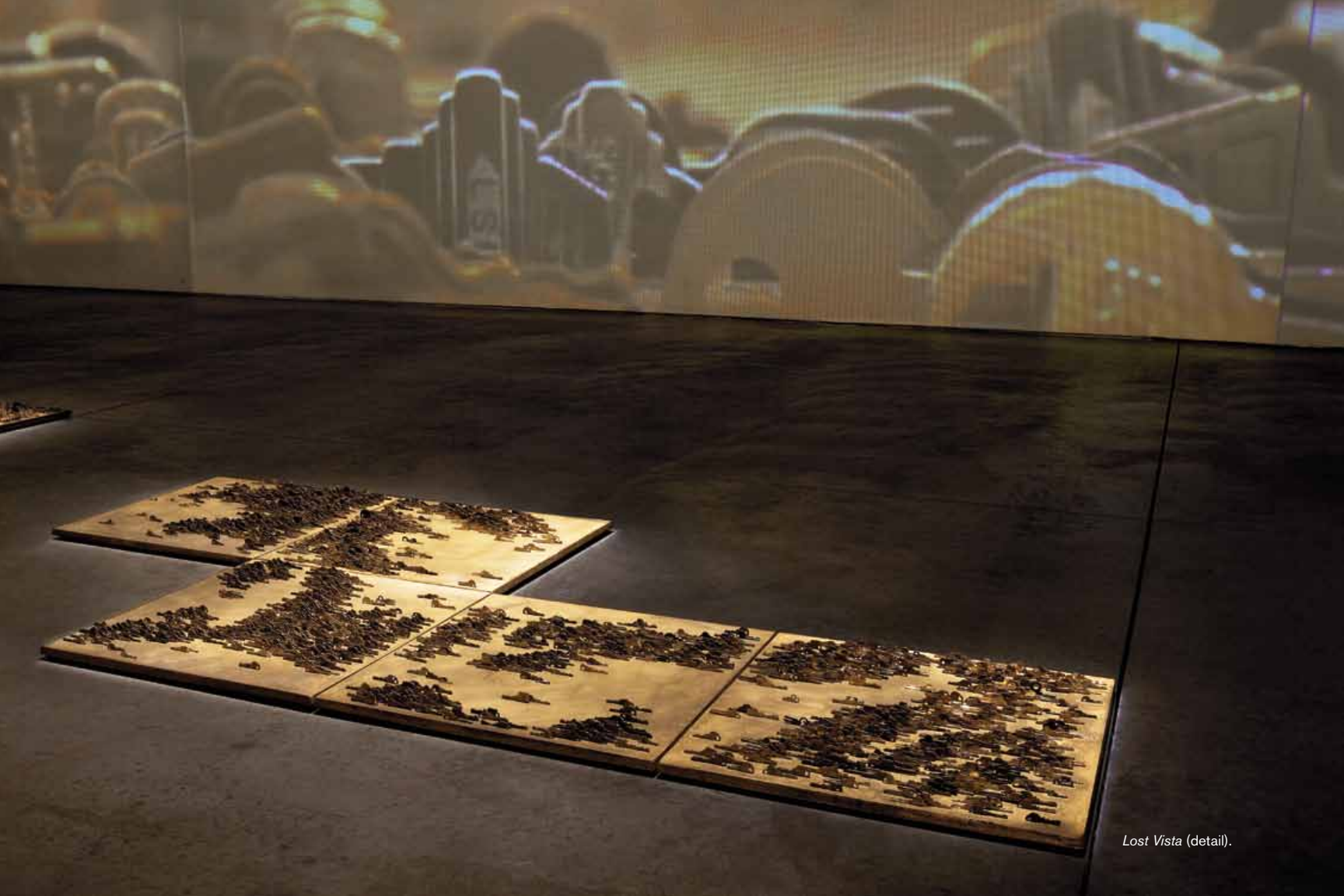


Above: water-jet cut brass tile made from melted keys. Below left: key layout process. Below right: volunteers inserting keys into tiles according to digital templates.

Lost Vista, installation view, 2010, keys, custom-cast brass and digital video projection, 144 x 144 x 288 inches.

Lost Vista (detail).

Lost Vista (detail).



Lost Vista (detail).

Unlocking, overall installation view, 2010.