

PRESIDIO HABITATS

MAY 16, 2010 – MAY 15, 2011

The FOR-SITE Foundation in partnership with the Presidio Trust is presenting *Presidio Habitats*, a site-based exhibition created for the Presidio of San Francisco, a 1,491-acre National Historic Landmark and national park site. *Presidio Habitats* is the first site-based exhibition to be organized for, and presented in, a U.S. national park.

The project had its conceptual launch in mid-2009 when the FOR-SITE Foundation invited an international group of artists, architects, and design specialists to submit a habitat proposal for a specific animal resident of the Presidio. From the 25 submissions, eleven were selected as commission projects to be fabricated and installed in the Presidio. The projects are situated in the northwestern corner of the park with dramatic views of the Golden Gate.

The artist projects on view in the landscape are diverse with respect to approach, material, and purpose. They range from a set of elegant blue-and-white glazed porcelain vessels conceived as habitats for the western screech owl by renowned Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, to a conceptual reintroduction of the extirpated desert hare to the Presidio through Nathan Lynch's reimagining of Aesop's hare and tortoise race, visually represented by whimsical towers demarcating start and finish lines for this apocryphal race within the park landscape.

An exhibition brochure featuring a map and summary information on the individual works and selected animals guides visitors on walking tours around the park. Visitors on these self-guided walks experience the habitat installations as well as explore the Presidio's diverse landscapes—historic forests, a community garden and nursery, stunning vistas overlooking the Pacific Ocean and Golden Gate, stately historic neighborhoods, and a hidden creek.

The starting point for the *Presidio Habitats* experience is a 1,300 square foot exhibition space designed by Ogrydziak/Prillinger Architects. In this space visitors may view the 25 proposals submitted for the exhibition, interpretive material, and artist models. This innovative freestanding structure—situated directly across from the Presidio's landmark Log Cabin—was created from three reclaimed shipping containers arranged at 120-degree angles around a covered central atrium. The building is the recipient of a 2010 Design Award from the American Institute of Architects, California Council.

Interpretive signage at each site highlights for the general visitor the unique aspects of the particular work and provides insights into the natural resources and animal for which the habitat was conceived. An audio narrative, accessible at each site by cell phone, affords an extended opportunity for visitors to learn more about the work, the artist, the resident animal, and the Presidio Trust's extensive habitat restoration and preservation efforts.

Presidio Habitats is on view for a full year, thereby providing visitors with an opportunity to experience the habitats in different seasons. Lectures organized by the Presidio Trust feature participating artists, natural resource specialists, and other professionals with unique insights into creative endeavors at the nexus of art and environment. The exhibition and related programs are offered to the public on an admission free basis.

Presidio Habitats is organized for the FOR-SITE Foundation by Cheryl Haines, Executive Director, and Hal Fischer, Director of Special Projects. *Presidio Habitats* is made possible by the FOR-SITE Foundation through private contributions and in-kind support.

***Presidio Habitats* Participants**

In the landscape:

Ai Weiwei
Philippe Becker Design
CEBRA
Chadwick Studio
Mark Dion with Nitin Jayaswal
Jensen Architects
Amy Lambert
Nathan Lynch
Surface Design, Inc.
Taalman Koch Architecture
Ogrydziak/Prillinger Architects

Presidio Habitats Exhibition:

Ai Weiwei
Philippe Becker Design
Jeffrey Berkus Architects
CEBRA
Chadwick Studio
CMG Landscape Architecture
Topher Delaney
Design Ecology
Mark Dion with Nitin Jayaswal
Amy Franceschini with ALITE Designs
Anya Gallaccio
Fritz Haeg
Walter Hood
Jensen Architects
Michelle Kaufmann
Amy Lambert
Nathan Lynch
Ogrydziak/Prillinger Architects
Rigo 23
John Roloff
SIMPARCH with Deborah Stratman
Surface Design, Inc.
Taalman Koch Architecture
Mark Thompson
Bruce Tomb and David Tomb

About the FOR-SITE Foundation

The FOR-SITE Foundation, a San Francisco-based nonprofit organization launched in 2003, supports the creation, understanding, and exhibition of new art about place. FOR-SITE fulfills its mission through artist residencies and graduate level education projects at its residency site in the Sierra foothills outside Nevada City, and through site-based projects initiated for the Presidio of San Francisco. FOR-SITE awards artist residencies and grants to selected artists whose work conforms to the organization's mission and interests. The residency is designed to provide the artist with the space, time, and resources to create new art and to ensure that this work is exhibited at a public institution. Through its education program, FOR-SITE provides opportunities for graduate-level students to experience both the practical and theoretical challenges of creating art for and of a specific place. The goal of FOR-SITE's Presidio initiative is to propose and implement projects that provide the public with new ways to see, understand, and appreciate the natural, historic, and cultural resources of San Francisco's Presidio, a 1,491-acre urban national park.

About the Presidio and the Presidio Trust

The Presidio of San Francisco

Founded by Spain in 1776, the Presidio is the birthplace of San Francisco, and one of four presidios, or "royal forts," built by Spain along the California coast. The U.S. Army assumed control of the post in 1846, and the Presidio remained the seat of western military power for the western states through World War II. The Presidio was named a National Historic Landmark district in 1962 with the discovery of el presidio, the archaeological remains of the original Spanish fort. In 1994 the U.S. Army left the Presidio and it became a national park site.

The Presidio Trust

Congress created the Presidio Trust in 1996 to preserve and enhance the Presidio as an enduring resource for the American people. It is governed by six presidential appointees and the Secretary of the Interior, or his designee. The Trust is required to fund the Presidio's operations, maintenance, and ongoing upgrades with income earned from rehabilitating and reusing the park's buildings. With nearly 800 structures, 1,200 residences, and the infrastructure of a small town, the Presidio has unique assets and challenges, in response to which the Trust was established. The Presidio is the only national park that is managed in this way. The Trust has won numerous awards for planning and historic preservation.