

NEW
235 BOWERY
NEW YORK NY
10002 USA
MUSEUM

**FESTIVAL OF
IDEAS FOR
THE NEW CITY
MAY 4-8, 2011**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 31, 2011

PRESS CONTACTS:

Gabriel Einsohn

press@festivalofideasnyc.com

Andrea Schwan, Andrea Schwan Inc.

info@andreaschwan.com

FESTIVAL OF IDEAS FOR THE NEW CITY TO TAKE PLACE MAY 4-8, 2011

**New Civic Event for New York Will Focus On Culture, Community,
Education, and Participation**

**Downtown Manhattan to Become a Dynamic Laboratory for Creative Thinking
and Action Bringing Together Scores of Participants and Public Events**

New York, NY...**The Festival of Ideas for the New City** is a major new collaborative initiative involving scores of Downtown organizations, from large universities to arts institutions and community groups, working together to affect change. The Festival is a first for New York and will harness the power of the creative community to imagine the future city and explore the ideas destined to shape it. It will take place from May 4-8, 2011, in locations around Downtown Manhattan in an area spanning East to West including the Lower East Side, the East Village, Soho, Nolita, and Chinatown—and will serve as a platform for artists, writers, architects, engineers, designers, urban farmers, planners, and thought leaders to exchange ideas, propose solutions, and invite the public to participate.

The Festival of Ideas for the New City was initially conceived by the New Museum three years ago as a natural outgrowth of its ongoing commitment to public education and civic outreach. The concept quickly attracted a core group of Downtown 'Organizing Partners' who have met regularly over the past two years. The eleven **Organizing Partners** are: **The Architectural League; Bowery Poetry Club; C-Lab/ Columbia University; Center for Architecture; The Cooper Union; The Drawing Center; New Museum (Founding Partner); New York University Wagner; PARC Foundation; Storefront for Art and Architecture; and Swiss Institute**. Together, the Organizing Partners reached out to hundreds of other groups and organizations to participate in the Festival.

The Festival of Ideas for the New City is organized around three central programs:

- A three-day slate of **symposia, lectures, and workshops** with visionaries and leaders—including exemplary mayors, forecasters, architects, artists, economists, and technology experts—who will address the four broad Festival themes: *The Heterogeneous City*; *The Networked City*; *The Reconfigured City*; and *The Sustainable City*. These events will take place at The Cooper Union, New York University, and the New Museum from **Wednesday to Saturday, May 4-7**.

- An innovative, minimal-waste, outdoor **StreetFest** will take place along the Bowery. More than seventy-five local grassroots organizations, small businesses, and non-profits will present model products and practices in a unique outdoor environment. The Festival will premiere a new environmentally inspired tent module commissioned for the Festival, as well as outdoor living rooms and inflatable structures. Visitors can expect cooking demonstrations with urban farmers, rooftop gardening classes, oral history projects, bike tours and valets, and a variety of affordable and healthy, locally grown, sustainable food options. The StreetFest will take place on **Saturday, May 7, 11 a.m to 7 p.m.**
- Over a hundred independent projects, exhibitions, and performances, which expand on the Festival's themes, will open at multiple festival partner venues Downtown, activating a broad geographic area. Projects include a solar powered mobile art studio; artist-commissioned roll-down, metal storefront gates; projections of poems in endangered languages on Lower East Side buildings; a prototype of an urban campground; a marathon event where architects will present their ideas about reconfiguring public space in a rapid fire format; an exhibit exploring the political, economic and social relevance of preservation and its role in architectural thinking; and a wide range of other activities exploring ideas for the future. These events will open **Saturday evening, May 7, and Sunday, May 8.**

Among the questions to be addressed through Festival programs are: What makes the city worth living in? How can we encourage and preserve the positive qualities of the city? How can technology be used to improve city life? Are there places or elements of the city that can be repurposed and re-imagined to serve new needs and populations? When we talk about sustainability, what do we mean? And, what can each of us do to contribute to a healthy, diverse, equitable, tolerant, innovative and fun place to live? Above all, how are the creative arts crucial to the above and how can they move conversation forward?

The Organizing Partners of the Festival are unified in their belief in the power of collaboration to make a difference and influence public awareness; together they advocate the central importance of creative capital to the quality of life in New York and any future city.

For a full list of Project Partners and a schedule of events visit www.festivalofideasnyc.com.

For additional information, please contact: press@festivalofideasnyc.com

Funding

The Festival of Ideas for the New City is made possible by a generous grant from Goldman Sachs Gives at the recommendation of David and Hermine Heller. Lead Sponsor: Audi Urban Future Initiative. Lead Supporter: The Rockefeller Foundation. Producing Sponsors: American Express, Brookfield, and Lonti Ebers. Supporting Sponsors: Virginia D. Lebermann and John S. Wotowicz, and Toby Devan Lewis. Special thanks to our Media Partner *New York* magazine. In kind donors: The Bowery Hotel and Droga5.

###