

CREATIVETIME

Media Contact:
Maureen Sullivan 212.206.6674 x 205
maureens@creativetime.org

WHAT CREATIVE TIME DOES IN VEGAS WILL STAY IN VEGAS (FOR THE WHOLE MONTH OF NOVEMBER)

HALUK AKAKÇE
SKY IS THE LIMIT, 2006
LAS VEGAS
VIVA VISION @ THE FREMONT STREET EXPERIENCE
NOVEMBER 3 – 30, 2006

(September 26, 2006, New York, NY) Creative Time, the premiere New York based public art organization, ventures to Las Vegas to present *Sky is the Limit*, a new artwork by Haluk Akakçe created specifically for Viva Vision, the world's largest video screen. Utilizing the latest technology to create a 'realer than real' experience, Akakçe's work stages a confrontation between artificial and organic life, suggesting both the liberating and alienating power of technology, and evoking an alternate fluid sense of space and time. Presented in partnership with the City of Las Vegas Arts Commission and the Fremont Street Experience, *Sky is the Limit* will premiere on November 3, coinciding with that month's First Friday art celebration, and play every evening at 8pm through November 30, 2006.

Viva Vision forms a canopy, suspended 90 feet above vintage Las Vegas on Fremont Street, and stretches 1500 feet - the length of four city blocks. The technological wonder, which incorporates 12.5 million high-definition LEDs, is the ideal venue for Akakçe's video piece, produced in collaboration with Glassworks, a pioneering London-based computer animation and effects firm, and featuring sound by Dan Donovan. Haluk Akakçe's project for Las Vegas furthers a recent cultural trend to invite artists to extend their vision to public video spaces. Projects such as Creative Time's *The 59th Minute Video Art on the Astrovision Screen by Panasonic* in Times Square (2000-2006), as well as public video programs developing in cities in the U.S. and Europe, are transforming a medium typically reserved for advertising into a beacon for further artistic exploration.

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Featured in solo shows in New York at the Whitney Museum of American Art and at Deitch Projects, Akakçe has exhibited widely in Europe including recent shows at the Max Hetzler Gallery in Berlin, The Approach and the Drawing Room in London, and the British Art Show 6. In his paintings, projections, and installations, the power of the digital to enhance experience coexists with the search for a primeval past or a utopian future. According to art critic Alex Farquharson, Akakçe opens a view into “a world of seemingly endless possibility... where it seems one may become anything simply by believing in its possibility.”

THE ARTIST

Born 1970, in Ankara, Turkey, and educated at Bilkent University, Ankara, and the Art Institute of Chicago, Akakçe has had solo exhibitions in numerous venues around the world, including the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Centro Nazionale per le Arti Contemporanee, Rome; Platform Contemporary Art Center, Istanbul; P.S. 1 Contemporary Arts Center, New York; The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Connecticut; and Kunst-Werke Berlin e.V. KW Institute for Contemporary Art. The artist is represented by The Approach, London. In 2000, Akakçe participated in Creative Time’s project, *DNAid*, with a billboard featuring a still from his video *The Measure of All Things*. Reading “Are We Ready?” the still depicted a double helix spiraling from the earth to the city skyline, representing his view of the future of technology.

PUBLICATION

A publication produced by CREATIVE TIME BOOKS, in association with SKY IS THE LIMIT, is sponsored by the City of Las Vegas Arts Commission, the Fremont Street Experience, and the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA). It will be available in February 2007.

FREMONT STREET EXPERIENCE

Since opening in 1995, the Fremont Street Experience has helped revitalize the heart of vintage Las Vegas. Viva Vision - “the biggest big screen on the planet” – is the major feature of the seven-block strip. It is surrounded by classic casinos, and iconic neon signs, preserved and restored by the Neon Museum, are now re-installed as sculptural monuments along Fremont Street.

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THE CITY OF LAS VEGAS ARTS COMMISSION (LVAC)

Established by city ordinance in 1987, the City of Las Vegas Arts Commission (LVAC) brings art and Vegas together. It initiates public art projects throughout the City involving local and nationally recognized artists as well as educational programs in area schools. The LVAC works with individual City departments, governmental agencies and partners with the private sector to help fund and develop projects within the City.

Akakçe's *Sky is the Limit* is part of the LVAC's Lightscapes video art series presented on the Fremont Street's Viva Vision that previously included work by Jennifer Steinkamp, Nancy Dwyer/Oliver Wasow, and Jim Blashfield. In 2001, Art in America recognized Lightscapes as one of the top twenty public artworks in the world.

GLASSWORKS

Glassworks is a pioneering digital effects firm, comprised of a team of leading computer animators and effects specialists. Based in London's Soho, Glassworks is at the forefront of developing new software that supports digital effects geared for emerging markets and immersive entertainment. Their many projects include the Björk music videos "All Is For Love" and "Nature Is Ancient."

CREATIVE TIME

Over the past 32 years, Creative Time has presented the most innovative art in the public realm. From our base in New York, we work with artists who ignite the imagination and explore ideas that shape society. We initiate a dynamic conversation among artists, sites and audiences, in projects that enliven public spaces with free and powerful expression. Our work has taken us all over the city from Times Square, the Brooklyn Bridge Anchorage, Coney Island, and the skies over Manhattan with *Tribute in Light* and cloud skywriting, to storefronts, milk cartons, deli cups, and billboards.

OPENING WEEKEND EVENT

Creative Time is organizing a trip to Las Vegas for the weekend of November 3. In addition to the opening of *Sky is the Limit*, the trip will explore the unique Las Vegas arts and cultural scene, from its neon signs and architecture to private art collections, new galleries, and artists' studios. Interested members of the press, please contact: Maureen Sullivan 212.206.6674 x 205 maureens@creativetime.org

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ART & CULTURE in and around LAS VEGAS

From high brow to kitschy to desert land art

The Neon Boneyard (www.neonmuseum.org/bonyard.html)

The Las Vegas Art Museum (www.lasvegasartmuseum.org)

The Guggenheim Heritage Museum (www.guggenheimlasvegas.org)

Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art (www.bellagio.com/pages/attract_gallery.asp)

Atomic Testing Museum (www.atomictestingmuseum.org)

First Fridays Las Vegas (www.firstfriday-lasvegas.org)

Galleries: Dust Gallery (www.dustgallery.com), The Arts Factory

(www.theartsfactory.com), Face Up Gallery (www.faceupstudio.com), Against the Wall

Gallery (againstthewallstudio.com), Dray's Place Fine Art Gallery

(www.draysplace.com), G-C Arts (www.gcarts-lv.com)

The More Viva Side of Vegas

Liberace Museum (www.liberace.org)

Elvis A-Rama Museum (www.elvisarama.com)

Off the Strip and Way Out in the Desert

Michael Heizer, *Double Negative*, 1969-70 (65 miles from LV strip, near Overton, NV)

Michael Heizer, *City* (unfinished), in rural Lincoln County, NV (www.diaarts.com)

Hoover Dam Museum, Boulder City (www.bcmha.org)

E-Team, International Airport Montello, 2006 (<http://www.artingeneral.org>)