

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***Reflections***

**Sonja Hinrichsen**

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**Sarah Chung, Joseph Davidson, & Erica Ristig**

**July 15, 2009**



**Denver, CO—July 15, 2009** — During her two-month residency at PlatteForum, **Sonja Hinrichsen**, new genre artist, created a new media installation that revolves around the gallery, reflecting shifting images on the walls, floors, and diagonal surfaces of the gallery. As the moving images overlap, they transform the space to create a sense of memory and history from Denver’s past. Outside, trains roar by the gallery windows adding another layer to the film’s sound collages. The overall effect is ethereal and dreamy. When viewers pause, they experience sounds and sights that trigger memories, perhaps of Denver’s history, as well as of their own personal perceptions of this place.

Hinrichsen states: *“Being European, the concept of Manifest Destiny has always struck me as something outrageous; as an attempt to officially legalize immoral and inhumane activities, including genocide. I knew that Denver’s history would interest me quite a bit and that it would very likely inform my work.”*

Hinrichsen flew into Denver during a thunderstorm and her first impressions were the reflections of light, sky, and clouds in giant glass walls of modern high-rises. At PlatteForum, she was delighted to find herself in the very core of the city’s activity, both past and present, where bands of Arapaho camped and where the tiny settlements of Denver City and Auraria originated in 1858 and ’59. Decades later, the city’s abandoned railroad yards and industries fell into decay during the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to make way for greenbelts and upscale living and office spaces, cafes, and restaurants that surfaced at the brink of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Denver’s railroads captured Hinrichsen’s attention with their frequent tact of exhausted engines, rattling of unlevelled steel wheels on tracks, screeching of brakes, banging of couplers, and honking of horns. After researching the railroad’s significance in the building of the American West, she realized that here at PlatteForum, the railroad is close enough to touch and make her heart jump. *“I wanted to bring the trains even closer, have them go right through the space, not just along its outer wall.”*

Hinrichsen used trains and Denver’s weather patterns as a framework for the installation. She incorporated video, sound, and narrative “Reflections” on Denver history, encounters between Native Americans and early settlers. Sarah Chung, Joseph Davidson and Erica Ristig created work for the installation that mapped the city and reflected on neighborhood history, architecture, women’s roles in Denver’s past and present and the frontier experience.

**Exhibition opens Thursday, July 30, 5:30 – 8:00 pm**

Exhibition continues through August 21, 2009

Tuesday-Saturday, noon - 4:00 pm or by appointment 303.893.0791

*Free and open to the public*

### **About the Artist**

Sonja Hinrichsen received her MFA in New Genres from the San Francisco Art Institute and two State Exams in visual art and media art from the Academy of Fine Art Stuttgart, Stuttgart, Germany. Sonja, who exhibits nationally and internationally in solo and group exhibitions, has received numerous awards and fellowships as well as 21 residencies in artist colonies around the world. Her latest work, "Snow Drawings," produced during a 2009 residency at Anderson Ranch in Snowmass, Colorado can be seen on her blog <http://sonjahinrichsen.wordpress.com/>

### **About Learning Lab for Educators**

This Learning Lab for educators consists of Creative Resident Sonja Hinrichsen and three teachers who participate in the creative process from inception to completion. Teachers then exhibit their work at the Lab's culmination. In addition, they develop lesson plans applicable for use in their classrooms that will be available for the general public to view at the opening. Learning Lab objectives are to teach teachers new models for arts integration into their classes; give certificate credit or graduate credit to teachers; expand PlatteForum's arts learning models into the classroom, and allow our programs to be catalysts for new models of integration in the schools.

Learning Labs for Educators are a one-of-a-kind summer workshops that encompasses the entire creative process from ideation to presentation. Throughout the Labs, the teachers develop a new body of work with an established artist and eventually exhibit their own work in a recognized arts venue in Downtown Denver. In addition, teachers develop lesson plans that can be integrated into their classrooms and are given the opportunity later in the year to exhibit student work that was created based on the Learning Lab lesson plans at PlatteForum.

PlatteForum offers a similar program for students during the academic year.

### **Location**

PlatteForum is located at 1610 Little Raven St., Suite 135 in Riverfront Park, Denver.

Call to schedule a free tour.

Information about PlatteForum and the Creative Residency Program can be found online at <http://www.platteforum.org> or by calling 303.893.0791.

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High-resolution images available by calling 303.893.0791

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### **PlatteForum**

Youth. Artists. Community.  
*Transform lives through art.*

### **We Believe:**

Through the creative process, PlatteForum gives hope and direction to underserved youth who collaborate with master artists from around the world. This experience transforms the lives of the youth, the artists and the community.