

329 Broome Street
New York, NY 10002

ARAB SPRINGS, ATLANTIC WEALTH: A TRADING ROOM

Curated by Jee Won Kim and Juan Puentes

November 1 – November 21, 2011

Opening Reception: Wednesday, November 9, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

White Box presents site-specific large-scale wall murals and daily in-situ performances as enacting the context of a “trading room” by the prominent conceptual artist/ecological activist **Peter Fend**. In revisiting the 30-year history of the *Ocean Earth Development Corporation* founded by Fend, detailed plans and technical drawings by naval architects, as well as videos produced by *Ocean Earth*'s founding members **Eve Vaterlaus**, **Wolfgang Staehle**, and **Sante Scardillo** will be exhibited in relation to the murals created by Fend. Using lessons learned from the groundbreaking satellite work of *Ocean Earth* for the mass media, participants of the firm have demonstrated how major engineering projects conceptualized by artists such as **Dennis Oppenheim**, **Michael Heizer** and **Walter de Maria** could be built in North Africa and the Persian/Arabian Gulf to create jobs, produce energy, and restore ecology. Combining both the satellite lessons and in-ocean tests in New Zealand, *Ocean Earth* presents a post-petroleum scenario with giant algae – a methane fuel source, at the two ends of the Arab world—Morocco on the Atlantic Ocean, and Oman on the Indian Ocean. Fend's drawings and photos will demonstrate viable ways to improve terrain and harvest excess biomass. Video of more recent *Ocean Earth* projects include “Global Feed,” a 15-part parallel-basin scheme for monitoring changes in the planet, principally using oceanographic satellite data.



In the main gallery, **Dennis Oppenheim's** *Dead Furrow* (1967) appears as the central thematic installation that serves as the primary reference for Fend's interest in an unrealized multichannel canal that would provide ecological advantages for water-stressed regions. On the wall murals of the “trading room,” Fend marks out real-life potential sites for where Oppenheim's earthwork could be installed as a functional structure.

Statement by Peter Fend:

Ocean Earth Development Corporation was established in 1980, emerging from the New York-based *Offices*, founded by **Peter Fend**, **Colen Fitzgibbon**, **Jenny Holzer**, **Peter Nadin**, **Richard Prince** and **Robin Winters**. *Ocean Earth* was specifically conceived as an instrument for implementing the goals of the environmental art movement, building upon the ideas of artists such as **Robert Smithson**, **Dennis Oppenheim** and **Gordon Matta-Clark** (with whom Peter Fend worked closely until his death in 1978). The organization has no fixed membership but functions as a loose association of artists, architects and scientists, shifting according to the needs of each project as they take place around the world (although Fend has been a central figure throughout). Through intensive inter-disciplinary collaborations, connecting ecological imperatives with future-oriented technology, *Ocean Earth* has sought to develop a wide range of strategies for improving our relationship to the environment.

The aim of the *Ocean Earth Construction and Development Corporation* is research on alternative energy sources. They use satellite imaging to monitor and analyze global ecological and geopolitical hot-spots, largely for media clients. Considering the world a living earthwork, ecological aspects are linked to and interconnected with artistic aspects.

For press inquiries please contact press@whiteboxny.org or 212-714-2347.

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