Award Winning French Architect to Speak in Chicago November 27

Chicago, IL—Golden Lion award winner Odile Decq presents a lecture titled “Horizons” at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) on Tuesday, November 27, 2012, at 6 p.m. The event is free and open to the public and will be presented in the Columbus Auditorium, 280 South Columbus Drive. For more information, please contact SAIC’s Department of Architecture, Interior Architecture, and Designed Objects (AIADO) at 312.629.6650 or e-mail aiado@saic.edu.

Odile Decq set up her first office after graduating at La Villette in 1978 while simultaneously studying at Sciences Politiques Paris where she completed a post-graduate diploma in Urban Planning in 1979. After several years of running her own firm, Ms. Decq created a partnership with Benoît Cornette in 1985, establishing the architecture firm ODBC. Decq’s first commission, the Banque Populaire de l’Ouest in Rennes in 1990, resulted in numerous prizes and ignited her international renown. The audiences who celebrated the building underlined the emergence of a new hope in architecture directly born from the punk rebellion that was turning old conventions upside down.

By questioning concepts of commission, use, matter, body, technique, and taste, the architecture of ODBC offers a paradoxical look, both tender and severe, at today’s world. ODBC was awarded a Golden Lion at the Venice Biennale of Architecture in 1996. As the sole principal of ODBC since 1998, Odile Decq has been faithful to her fighting attitude while diversifying and radicalizing her research. She completed the MACRO (Museum for Contemporary Art in Rome) in 2010, the restaurant in Opera Garnier in Paris in 2011, and the FRAC (Contemporary Art Museum) in Rennes in 2012. GL Events headquarter in Lyon will be completed early 2013. After having taught since 1992 at Ecole Spéciale d’Architecture in Paris, Odile Decq has been directing the school from 2007 to 2012.

“Horizons” is a presentation of recent projects of ODBC, including architecture, design, and installation at all scales from urban planning to door handles. The title refers to a personal analogy. For Ms. Decq, traveling towards the horizon line is like making architecture. The traveler must focus on one point in the distance while negotiating other elements to navigate successfully. However, as soon as the point on the horizon is reached, the horizon line is still further on. “My way of doing architecture is an adventure,” Ms. Decq says, “(like) sailing on the sea toward the horizon.”
In addition to the Golden Lion award, Odile Decq and ODBC have received continuous accolades, including three International Architecture Awards bestowed by The Chicago Athenaeum and two World Architecture Community Awards. Odile Decq became a Chevalier of the Legion d’Honneur in 2003, and she received the International Fellowship of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 2007.

This presentation is sponsored by SAIC’s William H. Bronson & Grayce Slovet Mitchell Lecture Series.

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