

**Art on Paper**  
**November 2002**  
**Paper Goes Public**

This fall, large-scale paper-based art projects hit the mainstream

Billboards, newspapers, postcards...all seem to be banal, everyday paper-based communications that blend into the backdrop of daily life, not necessarily, the stuff of effective public art. It is precisely because of these characteristics, however, that various institutions in New York and Philadelphia took on the challenge of launching public art projects this fall utilizing the most quotidian forms of paper based communication.

Residents of the Big Apple found paper public art had infiltrated many points of the metropolis. New York's **Museum of Modern Art** commissioned three artists, **Sarah Morris, Julian Opie, and Lisa Ruyter**, to create billboards addressing the theme of the urban landscape, dispersed in both Chelsea and Long Island City, as part of MoMa's ongoing Projects series (up through December 1, with related maps and postcards available at MoMA QNS in Long Island City). **Deutsch Bank** sponsored "Wordsearch," a complex conceptual project by German artist **Karin Sander**, consisting of 62,500 words written in 249 languages, collected from average New York City residents, which was featured in an unprecedented eight-page insert in the Business Day section of the *New York Times* on October 4. And in a public art series displayed on Canal Street in Manhattan, **Arts in General** included commissioned postcards by eight artists, writers, and critics, all of whom focused on the idea of nostalgia (available in Canal Street souvenir shops and newsstands through February 1).

In Philadelphia the **Print Center** launched a multifaceted paper assault with "Imprint: A Public Art Project" (continuing through November 9), the city's largest temporary public art project to date, featuring images by six artists (including **Dotty Attie** and **Kerry James Marshall**). Similar to Sander's project, the Print Center's initiative placed pages by the participating artists in the **Philadelphia Inquire** throughout September and October; and, on the same wavelength as MoMA, the Center presented billboards by the artists as well. In addition, "Imprint" featured bus shelter posters and paper coffee cups, available at various local restaurants, emblazoned with the artists' work. Simultaneously, the **Philadelphia Print Collaborative** staged "Broadstreet Broadside" on September 22, a public art event that brought together 500 volunteers to create the world's largest print (260 feet, made with a steamroller). The resulting composition features a variety of figurative and abstract subjects along with text addressing the theme of "freedom of speech," on view from November 13-29 at Philly's **University of the Arts**.

"Paper-based public art plays with the idea of a larger edition," observes **Judy Hecker**, Assistant curator in the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books at MoMA, and the organizer of MoMA's billboard series. "These projects effectively take art outside the museum and insert it into an everyday context and circumstance. Such easily distributed public art attracts non-art audiences who might make the link between what they encountered on the street to a museum. And they, in turn, might become new visitors...or just less intimidated by art."