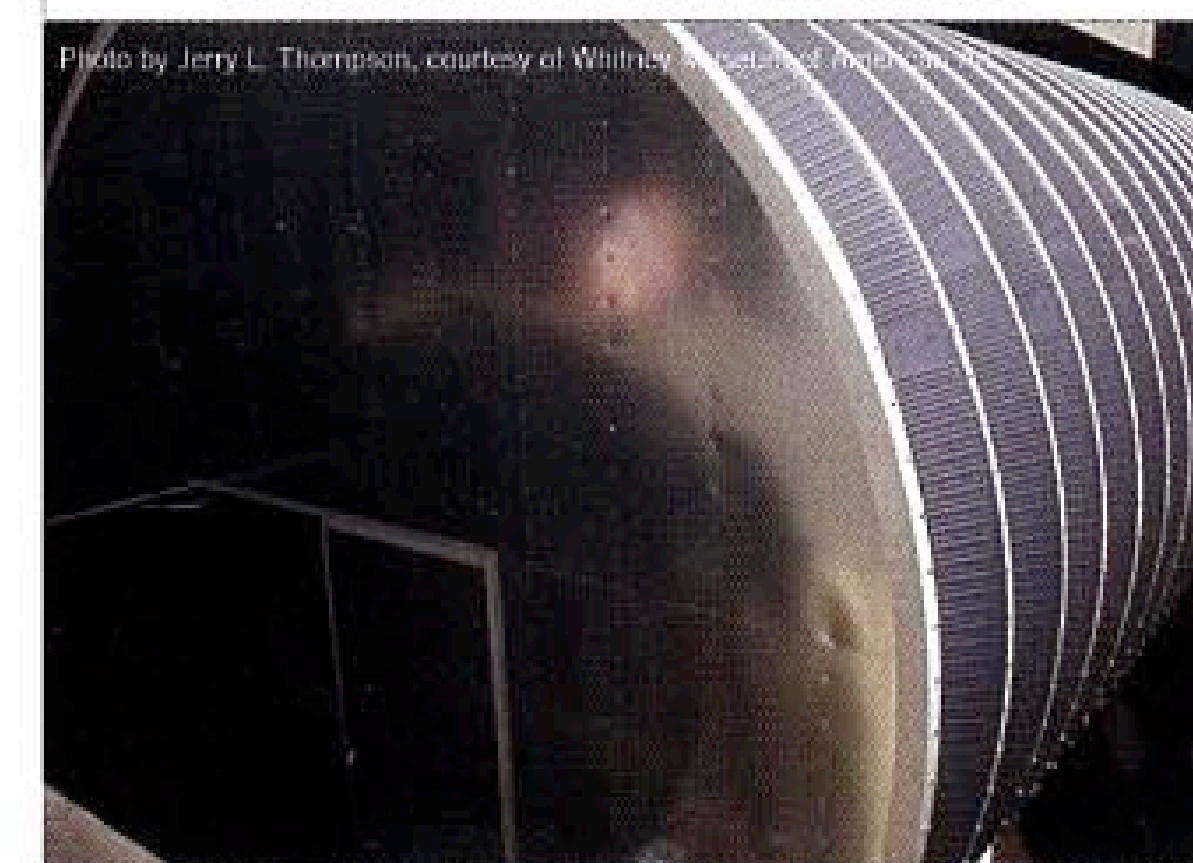




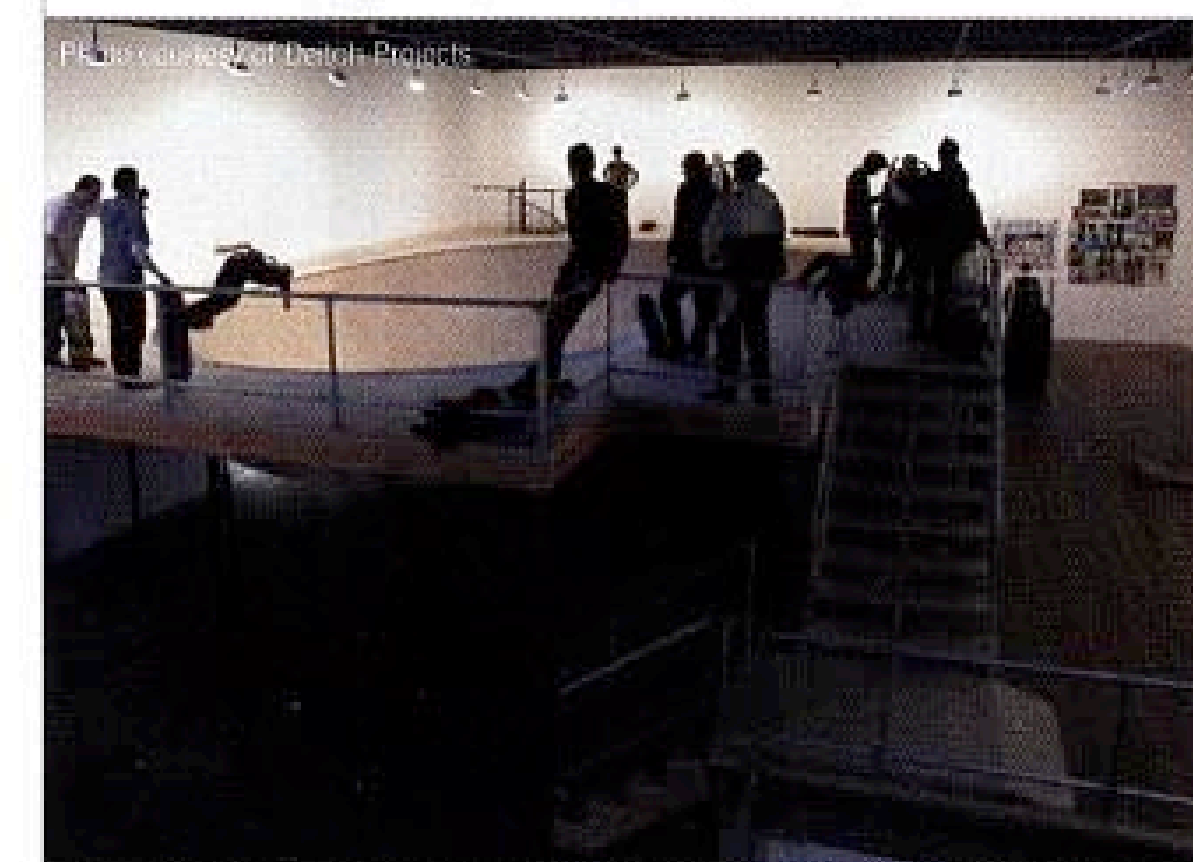
Simparch, *Clean Livin'*, 2003



Simparch and Kevin Drumm, *Spec*, 2001



Simparch, *El Tubo Completo*, 2004



Simparch, *Free Basin*, 2000

# INTERIOR MOTIVES

## ARTISTS EXIT WHITE WALLS TO ERECT DRYWALL

Andy Warhol designed wallpaper. Donald Judd made furniture. The art students at the Bauhaus built a house. Over the past century, the boundaries between art, life, architecture, and interior design have become increasingly blurred to the point where it's almost impossible to create distinctions between them anymore. Artists like Simparch, Jorge Pardo, and Marti Guixé continue to make spaces that give people the pleasure of connecting things up, figuring them out, going off in all different directions, without, in the end, having to settle on singular ideas or solutions. By designing spaces usually tackled by architects or designers, such as restaurants, retail spaces, skate bowls, and even houses, they throw wide traditional notions of an artist's "job description" to include reading schematics, addressing circulation issues, and supervising construction crews. Their spaces blend performance, installation, and commerce in a strange mix that works in a fuzzy style-zone between commodity and artwork.

The artist team of Matt Lynch and Steve Badgett, known as Simparch, revels in the failure to reduce spaces to a singular idea or use. They studied architecture at SCI-Arc (Southern California Institute of Architecture)—hence their name—and their work playfully engages architectural concerns, but they are not architects. Their projects are ambiguous, fun, and functional. The nationally and internationally exhibited *Free Basin*, 2000—a massive, beautifully minimalist sculpture—required consultations with scientists and other specialists to ensure the structure's integrity as a technically perfect skate bowl. Activated by the bodies of skate boarders, this installation unsettled art venues, at least for a while, turning galleries into another, more sporting, kind of space. For the most recent Whitney Biennial, Simparch designed another architecturally informed artwork, a social space for listening to music and watching films. Lounging museum-goers, taking a break from the rest of the exhibition, become performers, part of the work as they listen and watch.

The work's hilarious faux-Spanish title, *El Tubo Completo (The Complete Tube)*, 2004, reveals their playful sensibility, but like the skate bowl, the 40-foot-long corrugated silver cylinder made of Quonset hut components has a sublimely minimalist elegance to it—it's also a beautiful sculpture. And in another, more ambitious project called *Clean Livin'*, 2003, Simparch reconfigured military architecture to create a sustainable live/work space for visiting artists at the Center for Land Use and Interpretation in Wendover, UT. In addition to solar powered systems, *Clean Livin'* comes equipped with a moon-rover-like go-cart. At one end of the studio hut, a random spattering of windows—in multiple shapes—creates a whimsical sight in the otherwise stark desert landscape.