



INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART  
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NEWS RELEASE

## ANNE TYNG: INHABITING GEOMETRY

JANUARY 13, 2011–MARCH 27, 2011

**OPENING RECEPTION: THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 6-8PM**

EXHIBITION WALKTHROUGH WITH ARCHITECT ANNE TYNG AND CURATORS  
INGRID SCHAFFNER, SRDJAN JOVANOVIĆ WEISS, AND WILLIAM WHITAKER:  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 5PM, *ICA MEMBERS ONLY*

PHILADELPHIA, PA



(Top) Anne Tyng, notes and sketches for ICA installation, 2010. (bottom) Model by Srdjan Jovanović Weiss, 2010.

Visionary architect and theorist Anne Tyng has designed a gallery-scale model that embodies her thinking about geometry over the last half century. This installation—built largely from Luan plywood—realizes the ambition of all her work: to inhabit geometry. Since the 1950s, when she worked closely with Louis I. Kahn and independently pioneered habitable space-frame architecture, Tyng has applied natural and numeric systems to built forms on all scales, from urban plans to domestic spaces.

Upon entering Tyng's installation at ICA, one walks into the five Platonic solids, literally. A tetrahedron, cube, octahedron, icosahedron, and dodecahedron, each is built to human scale and can be entered, explored, comprehended. For optimum effect, look through these open structures at the massive spiral that lifts from the wall and rotates towards the ceiling. This is how Tyng sees the world and derives her own built forms, through the symmetries, orders, and dynamic progressions by which one form in geometry becomes another. The exhibition also features a selection of drawings, models, and other documentation of past projects, including: City Tower (with Kahn, 1952-1957); Urban Hierarchy (circa 1970); and the Four-Poster House (1971-1974). There are also examples of Tyng's publications and research, which investigate Jungian cycles, city squares, and the cosmos. Throughout, geometry is both rational and expressive, as much a means of contemplation as of calculation and construction.

Born in Jiangxi, China to missionary parents in 1920, Tyng spent long hours carving cities out of the soft stone of her garden terrace. After graduating from Radcliffe College in 1942, Tyng became one of the first women to receive a Masters of Architecture from Harvard University. She gained early recognition for the Tyng Toy, a kit of wooden puzzle-like pieces from which children could build furniture and other things. Starting in 1947 she worked closely with Louis I. Kahn and was instrumental in the design of the Trenton Bath House and Yale University Art Gallery, among other projects. In 1965, she was the first woman to receive a grant from the Graham Foundation for Advancement in the Fine

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\*checklist and images available upon request.

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
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#### HOURS

Wednesday, 11am-8pm  
Thursday and Friday, 11am-6pm  
Saturday and Sunday, 11am-5pm

Admission is FREE every day.  
*Free admission to the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania for the public is sponsored by the Amanda (C95) and Glenn Fuhrman (W87/WG88) Fund.*

For more information,  
call 215-898-7108/5911, or visit  
[www.icaphila.org](http://www.icaphila.org).

#### INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART

The Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania believes in the power of art and artists to inform and inspire. The ICA is free for all to engage and connect with the art of our time.

Arts. In 1964, *The Divine Proportion in the Platonic Solids*, featuring an enormous space frame, was exhibited at the University of Pennsylvania, where Tyng earned a doctorate in 1975 and then taught for almost thirty years. Her papers are housed at The Architectural Archives at Penn.

#### Related Public Programs:

##### Exhibition Walkthrough (ICA Members Only)

Thursday, January 13, 5pm: With architect Anne Tyng; Ingrid Schaffner, ICA Senior Curator; consulting curator Srdjan Jovanović Weiss, Assistant Professor, Tyler School of Architecture, Temple University; and William Whitaker, Curator of the Architectural Archives at the University of Pennsylvania.

##### Conversation: On Geometry, through the work of Anne Tyng

Whenever Wednesday, March 2, 6:30pm  
Penetrate the divine proportions of Platonic Solids and other symmetries as panelists from various disciplines take a fresh look at the work of Anne Tyng.

##### Field Trip: Architecture by Anne Tyng in and around Philadelphia

Saturday, March 19, Daylong  
Get on the bus for a day of site visits, including Bryn Mawr College's Erdman Hall and the Wharton Esherick Studio! Seating is limited. For details and reservations, please check ICA's website. \$20.

*Anne Tyng: Inhabiting Geometry* is organized by ICA Senior Curator Ingrid Schaffner, consulting curator Srdjan Jovanović Weiss, Assistant Professor, Tyler Architecture, Temple University, and William Whitaker, Curator and Collections Manager, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania. The exhibition is a collaboration between ICA and Penn's Architectural Archives, and is accompanied by a catalogue publication. \$20.

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