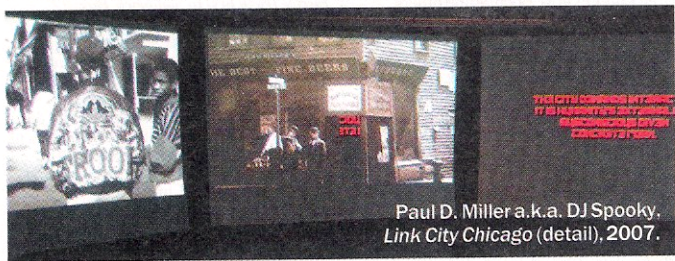


Paul D. Miller a.k.a. DJ Spooky



Paul D. Miller a.k.a. DJ Spooky,
Link City Chicago (detail), 2007.

★★★★★

Link City Chicago, Betty Rymer Gallery, through Jan 11 (see Museums & Institutions).

In the video installation *Link City Chicago*, Paul D. Miller (also known as DJ Spooky that Subliminal Kid) transmits a visual mélange of Chicago that sweeps across seven huge screens. Vintage stills give way to lush color videos—of

saturated blues, reds and yellow—shot from the El or a corner on Devon. Intertitles in Russian Constructivist–like typography flash Jenny Holzer–esque “truisms,” such as: “The city is a question for which there is no answer.” All this eye candy moves to a recording of Steve Reich’s symphony “City Life,” performed by the Kronos Quartet. It’s heady stuff. And it’s just what we might expect from Miller, a master sampler.

This project, commissioned by SAIC, is rife with cultural references art students should be filing into their brains, such as Charles Sheeler and Paul Strand’s legendary 1921 collaboration *Mannahatta* (dutifully noted in the gallery brochure). Miller says he owes his visual maneuvers to Russian filmmaker Dziga Vertov, but the nod should really go to the less exotic Ric Burns for the panning and zooming in and out of stills. Miller goes a step beyond, entering through obvious portals like windows with another layer of imagery, but he misses the opportunity to create a visual link to the passage of time; the conceit, according to his statement, is that it is a collage of four sections—City of the Past, City of the Future, Third World City and Industrialized City. This doesn’t make *Link City Chicago* any less stunning to watch, though.—*Ruth Lopez*