

“Unthinkable”

7 April – 14 April 2012

“Unthinkable” presents posters, books and other artifacts from the collection of Lorraine and Fredy Perlman prior to their donation to the Labadie Collection at the University of Michigan. Major periods and events represented include the May 1968 Uprising in Paris, the operation from 1969-1980 of the Detroit Printing Co-op, the translation and subsequent publication of the first English version of Guy Debord’s classic Situationist text “The Society of the Spectacle”, the substantial catalog of publications from the Perlman’s Black & Red press and the immense research undertaken by Fredy Perlman for his epic historical works “Against His-Story” and “The Strait”. In broad terms the material plots a similar path to the journey of Fredy Perlman, an influential thinker and printer based in Detroit from 1969 to his untimely death in 1985.

The Paris of 1968, that *“brief moment when, for the first time, and by way of paths that are still now very poorly understood, critical thinking rejoined practice”*, deeply affected Fredy Perlman and provided him with a constant reference point in his lifelong quest for social change. The Detroit Printing Co-op provided a collaborative project where political goals, the dissemination of ideas and the craft and labor of printing could be practiced simultaneously. This show provides a unique opportunity to view the printed legacy of that era and question whether that moment and the social change that Perlman sought are unthinkable.