

Notes

Gallery Talk by James Glisson

“Dario Robleto: the Signal”

December 10, 2024

James reiterated that the artwork in McCormick, Wasserman, and Von Romberg & Emmons galleries is directly related to the 70 minute film “Ancient Beacons Long for Notice”. He said that people will have a better understanding of these artworks after watching the film.

McCormick Gallery

“American Seabed”, 2014

James read the list of materials used in this work. He said it was the best place to start in understanding the piece. The work includes: fossilized prehistoric whale ear bones salvaged from the sea, various butterflies, butterfly antennae made from stretched and pulled audiotape recordings of Bob Dylan’s “Desolation Row”, concrete, ocean water, pigments, coral, brass, steel, Plexiglass

The way to think of this work is as an archaeological site of culture in the US these last 50-60 years. It is a fantasy of how the future will look back at the world we live in today. Robleto is interested in our senses, particularly hearing and seeing. Butterflies receive communication through their antennae. The magnetic tape that the antennae are made of and the brass rods that hold up the butterflies are used to communicate sound waves. The idea is that we as humans communicate using these materials. The whale ear bones and butterfly antennae are how other species communicate. Visually, there is a juxtaposition of the chunks of cement and the delicacy of the butterflies. The coral adds to the idea of a metaphorical seabed.

“Survival Does Not Lie in the Heavens”, 2012

Again, the list of materials adds to the understanding of the piece. At first glance, it appears to be a photo of the universe or the galaxy. However, the materials are: Digital inkjet print mounted on Sintra, a collection of stage lights from the album covers of live performances of now-deceased Gospel, Blues, and Jazz musicians.

Using Photoshop Robleto pulled photos of the stage lights from the album covers of live recordings of now-deceased musicians’ music and placed them on a black background. The record takes a live musical event – a passing moment- and records it on a record for eternity. The moment and the music of these artists lives on forever like the stars in the sky.

Wasserman Gallery

“Unknown and Solitary Seas (Dreams and Emotions of the 19th Century, 2018

Earliest waveform recordings of blood flowing from the heart and in the brain during sleep, dreaming and various emotional states (1874-96) rendered and 3-D printed in brass-plated stainless steel; lacquered maple, 22k gold leaf.

The piece shows the wavelengths of the heart rendered in stainless steel during various emotional states such as: Being Scolded, Religious Guilt, etc... It is a visual representation of the variance of the heartbeat through different states of mind.

Note: In the film “Ancient Beacons Long for Notice”, Carl Sagan’s wife, Ann Druyan, decides to include electroencephalograms (to record brain activity) and electrocardiograms (to record her heart) that were taken of her as she traced a specific mental itinerary, reflecting on things that make us human on the golden record that was sent into space on Voyager I and II.

Von Romberg & Emmons Gallery

In this gallery are a series of photolithographs taken of heartbeats under differing mental states of mind that were completed 1877-1913 when this technology was new. The mental states include; “Young Boy, dreaming”, “Smelling lavender”, “Sadness from listening to a sung melody”, “Panic attack”, etc... The lithographs were sequenced by John Herrington, the first Native American astronaut. They are meant to represent catching something ephemeral, being alive, capturing the aspect of being.