

The Point(s) of Stillness

How does one comprehend the vision of a portal seen while briskly walking down the sidewalk? When walking past Milstein Hall one cannot help but confront a great gap, or transition on the opposite side of the glaring gallery windows that lies one floor below. Beyond the salt and water stains—the winter’s lingering residue—sits a parallelogram of paper that within a blink oscillates between two and three dimensions, and back again. The glare upon tricks the peripheral glance into believing it might be a mirror, similar to one that creates the illusion of space inside a living room, or behind the whisky bottles in a local tavern. Whether a gateway to what is beyond, or a mirror of its very container, is seductively unclear. What is clear however, is that this mirroring, does not involve the looker, at least not directly or immediately.

The parallelogram becomes enticing as it affects My temporality—making one stop, look twice, get tricked by vision—while also changing the temporality of the space itself, delineating a Before and after, against and Beyond, with an interior that is distinctly present but inaccessible. I>I> (FF) to the confrontation with the invisible membrane. The great frame then deceives again by appearing to float as the delicate matte texture of the paper from which it is constructed gracefully repels itself from the glare of reflected light on the polished concrete gallery floor. From the sidewalk one can see and become aware of its texture, that there was an interior to the inaccessible space of the form that separates the Before from the Beyond. Upon closer look however, there is an outward force upon the paper holding in a perfectly infinite shape defying any possible configuration in which scroll itself could exist and carving out a circuitous path through which the markings would be read, and questions how anything could be read. The entire object reads as singular, and the pattern upon it reads as a whole—initially.

Then comes the pile. Within a faint circle that exists as both a positive and negative mark upon the floor is a pile of negative space—the circles from within the Boundary (scroll). There is little to no evidence of the human hand as all the circles seem too perfect, and the cut lines too fine, which draws one to consider what force or phenomenon might have extracted them from the scroll and swept them into that space. They resemble snow, or dandelion spores, evidence not only of the wind, but of transition—transition of seasons, transition from stillness to movement only to still again. The fragility of the white flakes creates a tension against the cold, weighty metal object (now redacted (in a manner that brings the utmost finesse to the otherwise aggressive act)) upon which they have been drawn leaving one to wonder about the object’s magnetic properties, conjuring an elementary fascination with natural attraction.

The architecture itself sits askew. One wall sits asynchronous from the rest of the gallery and creates a slash through the circle on the floor, a gesture that cancels it out as a form, scars its perfection while generating a new perfection; that of an unbalanced symmetry. This resulting symmetry is not subject to the container of the room, the walls and the windows, all of which contributed to its perplexing allure from the sidewalk. Now the center is the viewer, whatever eyes will search for that symmetry and discover the (new) perfection generated by the scar upon the circular form. This slash is also reminiscent of the singular mark that can be used to distinguish the letter O and the number (?) zero. This new vantage forces everything in the space to orbit the faint mark upon the floor, which cannot be categorized as either the work of the human hand or an incidental component of the architecture, given its recurring circular seams embedded throughout the concrete. The circle proposes an additional barrier, but only an implied one, making one aware of their own distance and place in orbit to every Present object.

Everything in this collection of works sits just below the surface, contained slightly Within. The "Dictionary"—its defining characteristic, its name, sits just below its own material surface, while just below it is its own means of production, which reveals yet another tense contrast in material—the dull white Slab against the lustrous potentiality of copper. Dictionary exists as stripped of all its meaning by its tense and aspect, should it be considered a noun (perhaps the quintessential or paradigmatic noun—being Thing and Idea that carves out place) against the wall that is the verb in service of the Aspect of the room.

The canted wall willfully forces a gap, separating itself from the tectonic structure of the room. The gap is very much a part of the exhibition, only to be filled with hollow cubes just out of reach and too low to be perceived for anything other than their emptiness, rough edges, and cracked surfaces. They sit between the wall and the pillar filling a gap, though new gaps lie within—an incomplete attempt to complete. Their existing with five sides however suggests failure, in contrast to the perfection of the circle on the floor. This form that is actively incomplete generates an absence of exponentially greater volume than what the cube would be should it be completed—the space of the negative more voluminous than the space of positive. This is reminiscent of the paper scroll gateway; The top down vantage point of the squares that bridge the gap that results from the crooked wall, the incomplete cube, remains flawed by the evidence of the human hand. The flaw in the form of the interconnected scroll, however, is due to vantage point, there is a distinct awareness that the spatial limitations will not allow the viewer to establish and perceive the squareness and balance of the scroll, exists much like the five sided object, it is always incomplete. This leaves one in the state of searching for a location, while knowing it cannot be found.

Now, to circle back (pun intended) to what was passed on the way into the exhibition. Collapsing the space between the interior and exterior of the gallery is a circular window, the scale of which bears striking resemblance to the white mark on the floor. Jammed horizontally across the diameter of the window is a (slightly uneven) line of wooden cubes, inscribed with round marks that could be ovals, o's, or zeros. The grain of the wood provides a topography from which the characters emerge creating an imposition (†) upon the naturally occurring forms. The pattern of characters, integrated with the landscape of the wood itself, then appears to be a gridded, planned arrangement of built structures, an urban landscape that emerges from the replication of a form, which in itself is meaningless. The complete structure suggests defiance of gravity, though the labor of such a task is has not been concealed. Evidence of the struggle is apparent as the individual pieces of paper wedged between the blocks to shim the blocks into a Semi-permanent construction. The most important task of in performing this feat then befalls the paper, though not the portion that is seen, but the portion that is hidden and interior to the structure, sitting below the horizon of wooden blocks.

Another work that remains just 'below the surface' is the video in the farthest section of the gallery. A thin veil of film like paper intercepts the light of a video projection and allows for another temporal shift as it can be viewed in full from both sides. Viewing the work either forward or backward establishes sameness within the time and space of the room that remains independent from the video itself. The screen contains the four dimensions of the video within the flat plane, a responsibility far too great for a single sheet of paper overloading it with signification. This asymmetry begs one to interact with it visually and spatially to absorb the burden of meaning. The sameness of the image, coupled with the difference of appearing backwards, reiterates the Before and Beyond transition established by the architectural paper scroll. The video is the top view of a block of wood, in the process of being burned and charred, seemingly removed of its rings and ridges, which define and describe its material presence. The mechanical process then negates the wood's natural history. The image of the wood block lies within a contained and volatile focal plane. The block moves in and out focus confusing the space of what was recorded and what is projected. This marks an inward return to the Before and Beyond. Could it be the screen moving ever so slightly, or is it the motion of the machine performing the tasks that tricks the camera into this discrepancy? The limitations of optics in photographic recordings are apparent once again when the block begins to spark and flame. Light generated by this thermodynamic process is what illuminates and allows for the etchings to become legible as ovals, Os and zeros. Legibility then diminishes once again as the brilliance subsides. Only the process of inscribing can reveal what is inscribed. Heat, energy at its most chaotic, then becomes the means by which the orderly and structured pattern being imposed upon the block can be recognized. The process of revealing the

inscribed language, but only by the mechanized task, creates a circuitous internal logic that mimics the form itself, and is in turn mimicked by the path one is compelled to traverse within the space in order to view the work in either orientation. The content scrawled upon the block neutralizes the process of reading, as it is the same forward and backward, top to bottom. However the machine moving against the grain (right to left) disturbs the anticipation or expectation of reading and contrasts the neutralized language on the block.

This exhibition generates negative space as though a by-product of some fleeting and some successful attempts at inflicting the form of a square into a circle and vice-versa. The scale of either is never revealed, only the shape, only the form and the frustration that comes with this blind imposition of one geometric form upon another in an inwardly cascading pattern of negative space generated ad infinitum. In forcing one shape upon another a residual exterior remains and is then carved away only to generate a new form—the inverse of the previous, which remains in the memorial trace of that which it was Cast. Each permutation becomes one step farther removed and generates the overlooked discrepancy of forms, letterforms, and numbers, which can all exist simultaneously.

One final gesture escorts the viewer from the space. An oblivious microphone waves in the wind, perhaps the Same wind that blew the paper dots from their home in the scroll and into the perimeter of circular marking on the floor. The however is incomplete, it appears as a microphone but is in fact merely a blockage, a void in the light source by which it is illuminated. A microphone is the vessel by which sound travels and becomes electricity, that sound all too often produced by the body and the result of the body's own electrical impulses. Perhaps the same body whose silhouette recently passed through the frame. Could that bodily movement have generated that wind, that Same wind? This electricity of sound is then nullified by a new and chaotic energy, that of the light, which defines and contains the image—that of sound's potential transference. The affect of the video is that of *Waiting to speak*, though the image of the hollowed out microphone seems stilled as though having already completed its task. The slight sway then becomes a gentle nudge on the back of the occupant, all that remains is ambient sound, a reverberation forged by the aftermath of a sound or word (or both)—...

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