Boston Art Windows
Window Collision One*

Downtown Crossing

22-24, 34 Bromfield Street
395 Washington Street
Avery Street (40 Mason Street)
Boston, MA USA

Curated by *jackbackrack*

Exhibit: Apr 25 - Jun 30, 2005
Opening Reception: Monday, April 25, 2005, 5-8pm

Introduction

Boston Art Windows, a joint project of Mayor Thomas M. Menino, the City of Boston, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), Boston Art Windows Project and the Collision Collective, is an effort to enliven the windows of commercial property in downtown Boston with cutting-edge contemporary art.

"Windows Collision One" is a curated show of envelope-pushing new media artwork by Collision Collective, a consortium of artists. Each window art piece involves provocative and novel use of technology including aspects of time, interactivity and performance. Ten pieces of art are presented by Rob Gonsalves, Simon Greenwold, Steve Hollinger, jackbackrack, Brian Knep, Jeff Lieberman, Kevin McCormick, Andrew Neumann, Dan Roe, sosolimited, and William Tremblay.

Exhibits

Homespun (2005)

Simon Greenwold
Newton, MA USA
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Dollhouse, electric motor, camera, computer, monitors
6' X 6' X 6'

Homespun is dedicated to anyone who has ever felt turned upside down by forces beyond their control. It is a dollhouse rotating slowly end-over-end on an axle and a video feed of the inside of the house. (In the video, the rotation is removed, so the furniture prowls slowly around the room from floor to wall to ceiling.) It is about the heaviness and danger of the objects with which we surround ourselves and the fragility of the shells we live in.

Algorithmic Materialization Study #0 (2005)

sosolimited
Cambridge, MA USA

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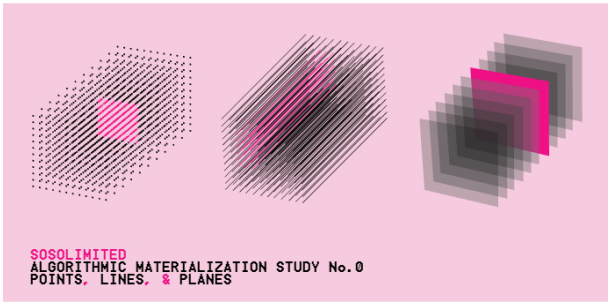

televisions, software, sound
3x4x8'

After establishing a set of algorithmic and architectural rules, each member of sosolimited was given a graphical primitive - points, lines, or planes - with which to compose in graphical and sonic space. The sounds drive the motion graphics and the graphics modulate the sounds.

Downtown (2005)

Steve Hollinger
Boston, MA USA
mail@sjh.com
www.stevehollinger.com

Mixed media
8' x 8' x 8'

"Downtown" is one in a series of Steve Hollinger's sculptures that use strands of thread to examine the most delicate of forms, structures and connections.

Full Backup (2004)

jackbackrack
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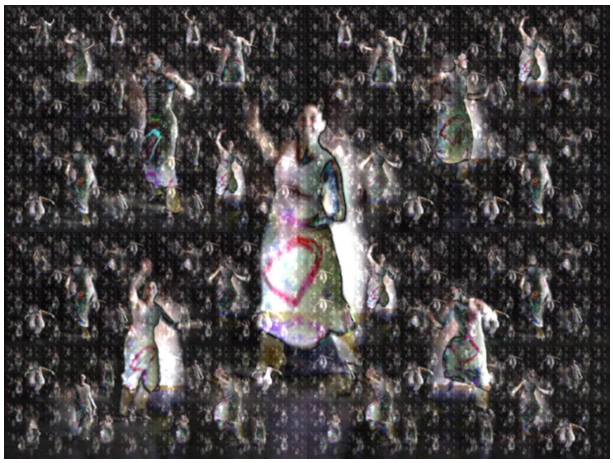

Video Camera, Computer, Projector, Gooze Video processing
5'x5'x5'

fullbackUP is an interactive video installation that responds to people's movements by amplifying and replicating them. Internal video feedback loops generate direct and indirect patterns, introduce delays and effects to produces a visual landscape that is revealing and constantly changing. It is written in his stream processing language, called Gooze, allowing the creation and scripting of fx modules combining wide ranging techniques such as 3d, vector and image based graphics. Thanks to Nell Breyer and Geo Homsy for their inspiration.

Big Smile (2003)

Brian Knep
Boston, MA USA
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www.blep.com

Computer, Video Projector, Video Camera, Custom Software
4x4x4feet

Big Smile is a large, archetypal smiley face. It blinks, looks around at viewers, and smiles only when no one is looking directly at it. Viewers get a glimpse of the smile as they look away, but when they look back the face no longer smiles. The piece is mounted on a window and interacts only with visitors directly in front of it.

The piece is large (about four feet in diameter) and placed high on a window so as to be somewhat imposing. Like a scary clown, Big Smile can be both comforting and disturbing. The image is immediately recognizable and evokes happy memories, yet its size and position in the window are out of proportion–it's too big and too high–and its behavior is certainly unfriendly. As much as viewers are looking at the piece, the piece is looking at them, and by smiling only when no one is looking, the piece seems disdainful of the viewers' participation. It asks, "Why are you looking at me," when of course without viewers the piece wouldn't exist.

Big Smile is an exploration of interactive art–art that changes in response to visitors and that often doesn't exist without viewer participation. The piece reverses the common sense of "viewers" looking at works in a gallery, and brings up issues of gaze and active participation. There are two ways to view this piece. In front of the piece, viewers interact directly with the smiley face. Off to the side, viewers watch this dance between the computer and the person or people directly in front.

Slink (2004)

Jeff Lieberman
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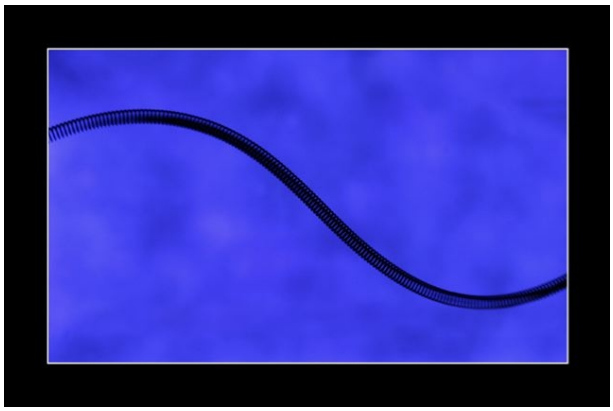

Aluminum, Corroded Steel, Acrylic, Electronics, Custom Voice Coil with Flexure Mounts, 1980 LEDs, Extension Spring
4'x4'x1'

A voice coil vibrates linearly at roughly 50 Hz, at the resonance frequency of the flexure mounts on which it travels. This shakes an extension spring, tuned to match the voice coil frequency for one of its resonant modes. 12 banks of 165 LEDs each strobe behind the spring, through a translucent acrylic window, matching the vibrational frequency and running at roughly 1% duty cycle, allowing the viewer to see the spring in a suspended/frozen state. Changing the relative phase between the 12 banks of LEDs creates a positioning system for each segment of the spring, which allows the spring to be broken into segments and seemingly moved independently of the physics governing the original vibration. Various effects are explored from this initial thought.

Many thanks to: Jack Holloway (hardware), Josh Glazer (software), Neil Jenkins (materials), and to jackbackrack, James Bales, Zoz Brooks, Arthur Ganson, Eric Gunther, Jessica Hinel, Dan Lovell, Kevin McKormick, Dinsha Mistree, Cha-Ling O'Connell, Dan Paluska, Derek van Beever, Dick Whitney, for soldering time, useful conversations, and inspirado.

Corona (2003)

Kevin McCormick
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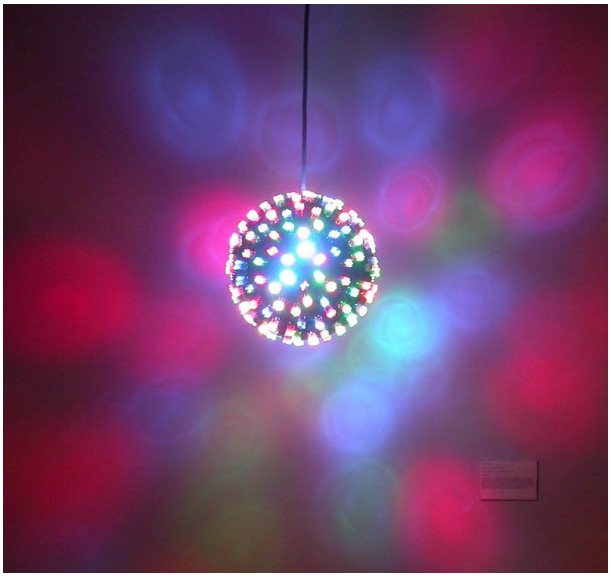

naked electronics, LEDs
1 foot sphere, hung from a 3/8" cable. Approximately 2 pounds.

Corona began as an engineering experiment, to explore the potential of a new microchip developed by Color Kinetics Inc. of Boston, for whom I work. The tiny chip, coupled with one or more equally tiny red-green-blue colored LEDs (Light Emitting Diodes), permits the synthesis and variation of over 64 billion colors of light under the control of a computer, in a space the size of a pencil eraser. Armed with this technology, I set out to create a device that simultaneously proved the performance of the chip, that was aesthetically interesting, and that up until this point was technically very difficult to build. The result was Corona.

Corona is constructed entirely of the materials of modern electronics. 180 triangular circuit boards interlock, edge to edge, to form a geodesic sphere. Under computer control, directional red, green and blue LEDs on each board project 180 spots of saturated color onto walls, ceiling and floor, undulating, sweeping and fading. The sphere itself is brilliantly bright, but appears to be an ultra-minimal video display; viewing pixels on a sphere is a bit like viewing a globe in ones hands rather than a paper map of Earth. It could serve as a "lamp" in the sense of something that provides illumination, but no chandelier or stage luminaire can compare.

To the engineer, Corona is an ingenious device, carefully crafted. To the artist, it is a pleasing form built in the medium of naked technology. To the pragmatist, it is a new kind of light, one more nail in the coffin of Edisons incandescent bulb.

"Industrial Tree" (2005)

Andrew Neumann
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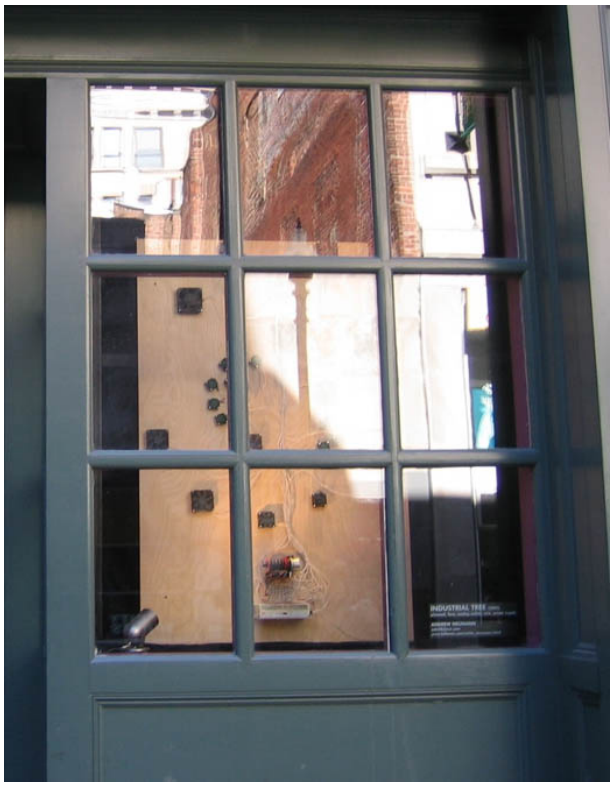

Plywood, fans, analog switch, wire, power supply
4x5'

Captivity: Specimens one and two (2004)

Dan Roe
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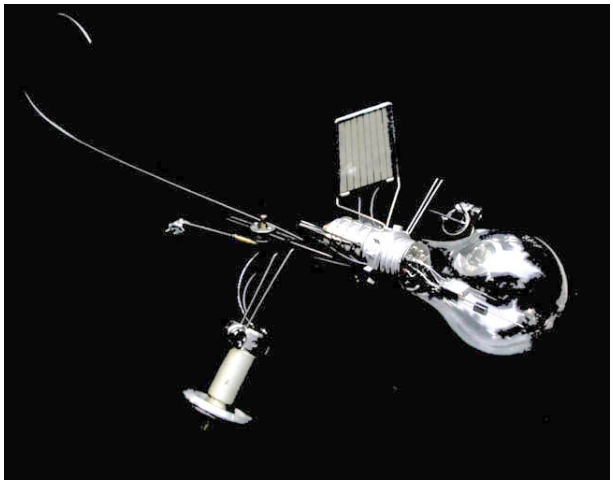

Steel, solar engine (motors, glass solar panels, circuitry)
14”x24” and 19”x19”

Dan Roe finds the conceptual interplay between technology, science, and art to be fascinating. In his art, technology and science sometimes inform the construction of a sculpture, while the sculpture in turn illustrates an abstract concept. At other times his sculptures are studies of natural and theoretical anatomies that seek to imitate nature. They are in this sense artificial life forms.

The specimens in the current exhibition are artificial life forms created from wire and circuitry. Consider either one, and let us wonder at the most life-like aspect of this specimen. Is it some physical characteristic, the shape of the wings, the tail, the placement of motors roughly where feet should be, or perhaps the infrared photosensors in the place of eyes with brain-like control circuitry behind? Or is the most life-like characteristic behavioral, and to be observed in the way the body moves and flexes against its chains, while simultaneously seeking a light source to power its movement? Neither proposition addresses the situation in which this sculpture finds itself. This artificial life form is in a fruitless struggle against bonds it can not hope to break, and it is destined to struggle against these bonds so long as it moves. The creature is captive to a moment in time from which it will never free itself, and this unending struggle is its most life-like aspect.

Wave Puppet (2005)

William Tremblay, Rob Gonsalves
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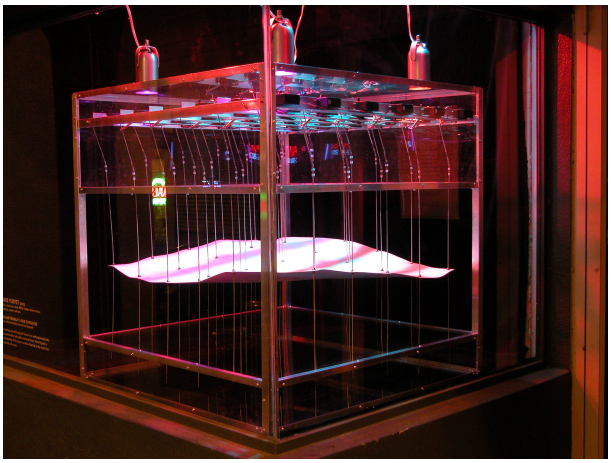

Acrylic, aluminum, steel, EPDM rubber, servo motors, computer, custom software
3*3*3 feet

Translating powerful physical forces to an anthropomorphically comprehensible and safely inanimate form, Wave Puppet is a marionette of the ocean’s surface directed by the math that underlies all waves. Wave Puppet is an open-framed cube containing a flexible sheet suspended horizontally. The sheet hangs from 36 vertical steel rods, evenly spaced in a grid pattern. Each rod is attached to a computer-controlled servo motor through a mechanical linkage. When a motor actuates, the point on the surface of the sheet connected to the rod rises or falls, deforming the sheet. When this motion is coordinated by computer, complex wave patterns are generated, capturing the dynamics of liquid in a purely mechanical form. Additional complexity arises from the inherent imprecision of the motors, at once enhancing the puppet’s similarity to water and calling attention to its simulated nature. A motion detector signals the approach of a viewer, beginning the puppet show.