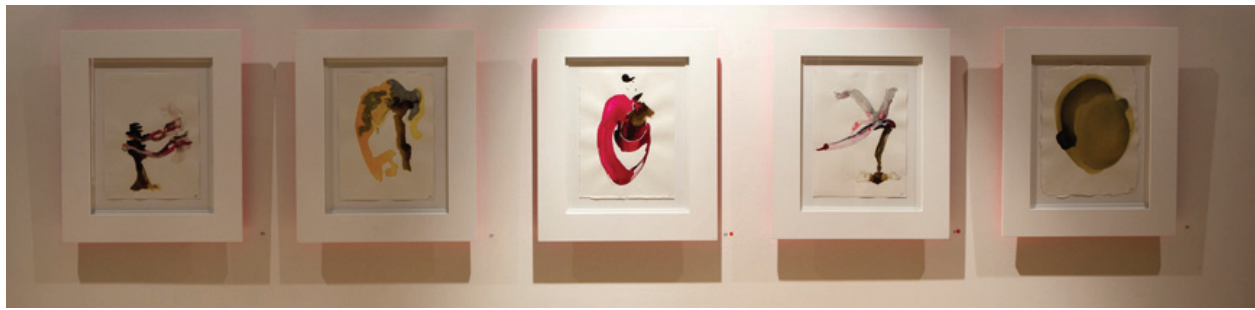


Bird – Like Things in Things Like Trees



The Show:

Bird-Like Things in Things Like Trees is a multi-media collaboration between visual artist, Rob Tarbell, and composer, Dr. Douglas Boyce. The project encompasses new paintings and drawings, glass horns producing video or sound, a live performance of an original musical composition, and the projection of spatialized audio loop in the exhibition/performance space.

Doug and Rob conceived the collaborative project during a stay in the medieval village of Auvillar in southwestern France at the Virginia Center for Creative Arts in the summer of 2010. As we shifted our daily life from a cycle of driving and teaching, to one of walking and markets cobblestone streets, we were both struck by a heightened presence of birds in our lives— neither of us had pursued mimetics previously, we felt obligated by our situation to trace our encounters with these birds into our art in some way. The project might be understood as speculative ornithology – originating from attempts to construct unfamiliar birds and beings based on interpreted, interrupted, or fleeting encounters while in a seemingly familiar yet foreign place. That intent was entangled, energized, and distracted by the excitement and expectation of significant change. Also under interrogation is the situation of observation, recollection, or construction of memories in retrospect based on the original encounters.

Sounds Like:

The exhibition opens with the acoustic musical work performed live by chamber orchestra, Harmonious Blacksmith, with-in the gallery displaying the paintings and drawings. For the remainder of the exhibition, the spatialized sound system creates an audio installation, by playing a continuous loop of an abstracted version of the live performance. The spatialized sound system distributes all or portions of the music inside a 360 degree perimeter.

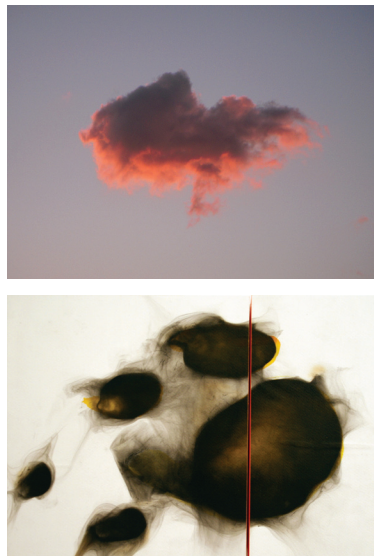


Aesthetically the musical works will continue the timbral and aleatoric explorations of Douglas Boyce's recent work, *102nd & Amsterdam* and *A Brief History of Acceleration*. (Both of these pieces can be heard on www.douglasboyce.net under Athenaeum then Listening.) The ensemble will consist of violin, piano, cello, and percussion. By displacing the performers out of sight, the audience is situated spatially within the umwelt of these bird-like sounds; rather than reducing the experience of a sighting to either pure sound or simple visual observation, the audience is invited to experience a particular line-of-flight at a particular place and particular moment in musical time.



Looks Like:

With *Bird-Like Things in Things Like Trees*, Rob Tarbell's interest lies in fabricating immediate yet elusive objects. These slippery icons hover between the representational and abstract while resting in the uncanny. The work is dependent on projected and reflected light. On the cloud photograph and panel pieces, direct light illuminates backs, sides or splits creating a bounce of pinkish orange light. With the shaped canvases, light initially passes through the ink and reflects off the under layer of mirrored mylar, creating patterns and echoes of the ink image on the polyester surface. As the viewer passes, layers compress or pull apart or hover while the reflected light image appears or disappears. The translucent mirrored glass horns accept and reflect the surrounding environment while projecting sound and images through concealed speakers and pico projectors embedded within.



For more images, music, and information:

www.robtarbell.com

www.douglasboyce.net