drawn into a dialogue ...
... with John O’Brien and Steve Roden

The Cerritos College Art Gallery is pleased to debut a repurposed incarnation of its small North Gallery as a dialogue space, inviting emerging and established artists to collaboratively produce and exhibit new work. A variation on the more common project spaces seen in commercial and academic art galleries, this new space for dialogue is dedicated to providing a venue for deliberatively surfacing the complex negotiations and navigations of thematic concepts that occur via creative, transactiveal exchanges between contemporary artists.

The inaugural exhibition in the dialogue space is the appropriately titled drawn into a dialogue, a collaborative site-specific experiment in call-and-response drawing produced by renowned LA-based artists John O’Brien and Steve Roden. Invited by Cerritos College Art Gallery director/curator James MacDevitt to participate in this debut exhibition, the artists decided to give form to an ongoing conversation regarding their respective art processes, in particular (through) their drawings. They have therefore been drawn into a dialogue both literally and metaphorically.

With the unavoidable gravitational pull of a black hole, the powerful central theme of dialogical relationships continued to expand. Inspired by the soon to be superseded mid-century modernist architecture in which the Cerritos College Art Gallery is located on campus, O’Brien and Roden will integrate the aesthetic patterns of the exterior of the building into the interior of the gallery space ... and vice versa.

Using linear metal elements that visually and structurally mirror the exterior of the aluminum façade of the building as scaffolding, drawings produced individually by the artists will be hung collaboratively in the gallery space as a kind of physical conversation. Taken from different bodies of work, but connected through the actual installation process, their drawings will be contextually informed by the recognition of their overlapping conversations and an established history of convergences and divergences in their respective works.
In conjunction with the temporary exhibition in the dialogue space, the artists have constructed a permanently-installed and site-specific sound sculpture in the exterior gallery courtyard, directly in front of the gallery entrance. With a sound composition based on the architectural rhythms of the building’s colored panels, this outdoor installation will both visually and musically deconstruct the aesthetic logic of the building itself, reinterpreting the façade motifs as both framing device and an autonomous decorative element.

As a permanent installation, the sound sculpture will serve multiple functions and participate in multiple dialogical relationships. Initially in an on-going and interactive exchange with the current architectural features of the Fine Arts Building that surrounds it and secondly as an interpretative archival document, a memory fragment, of that current structure once it is eventually replaced with a newer building in the not-to-distant future, ensuring that physical demolition will not result in complete and total erasure.

Funding for the sound sculpture generously provided by the Cerritos College Foundation.

Related Events

Artists’ Talk
February 25, 2011

12PM @ FA43
John O’Brien and Steve Roden

Founded in 1955, Cerritos College is a public comprehensive community college in southeastern Los Angeles County. The mission of the Cerritos College Art Gallery is to serve as an educational, social and cultural enhancement for the Cerritos academic population as well as the immediate surrounding communities.

The Cerritos College Art Gallery presents rotating exhibitions highlighting the work of emerging and mid-career artists. A special emphasis is placed on works that confront challenging and pressing issues in contemporary art and culture. In support of exhibitions, the Cerritos College Art Gallery also regularly hosts workshops, lectures, and performances.

Admission and events are free and open to the public.
Daily Parking is available for $2.00 in lot C-10 in the student white stalls only.

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