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ARTS & CULTURE » VISUAL ARTS

'Time as Landscape' considers the meshes of cosmological, geological and human scales of time

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Rosa Barba, "The Color Out of Space"

By Leah Sandler

TIME AS LANDSCAPE: INQUIRIES OF ART AND SCIENCE, through Dec. 31, Cornell Fine Arts Museum, Rollins College, 1000 Holt Ave., Winter Park, 407-646-2526, cfam.rollins.edu

Time as Landscape, currently on view at the Cornell Fine Arts Museum and the Alford Inn in Winter Park, ruminates on the scale of life and human action in relation to time and geological change. Considering the incomprehensible coalescences of cosmological, geological and human scales of time, the exhibition, curated by Amy Galpin and Abigail Ross

Goodman, features works by artists who share in their practice an awareness of, and keen interest in, the infinities existing in microcosm and macrocosm in our universe. The exhibition is punctuated with selections from the Smith Watchkey Collection, juxtaposing the extraordinary wonder of the observed world with the quotidian measure of time at a human scale. Considering parallels in fields of scientific and artistic observation, *Time as Landscape* offers time to critically reflect on the possibilities and limitations of our modes of understanding the intricacies of our world.



- Dawn Roe, "Cloth Left 2 Days at Cemeterio de Portbou"

Florida Prize in Contemporary Art nominee, Rollins College professor and Orlando resident Dawn Roe's contribution to the show, a small cyanotype created during a recent residency in Portbou, Spain, titled *Cloth Left 2 Days at Cemeterio de Portbou*, acts as a record of time and physical contact between an experienced reality and its mediated representation. An alternative photographic process using photosensitive chemicals and exposure to light, the cyanotype process was first introduced by an astronomer in an attempt to reproduce his handwritten notes, and was used well into the 20th century as a low-cost method of graphic reproduction. In the case of Roe's experimentations with cyanotype, her focus is on recording

perceived moments, rather than documenting or reproducing an image of a readily identifiable subject or signifier. In Roe's piece, the relationship between time and human perceptions of the landscape is elegantly visualized in shades of blue.

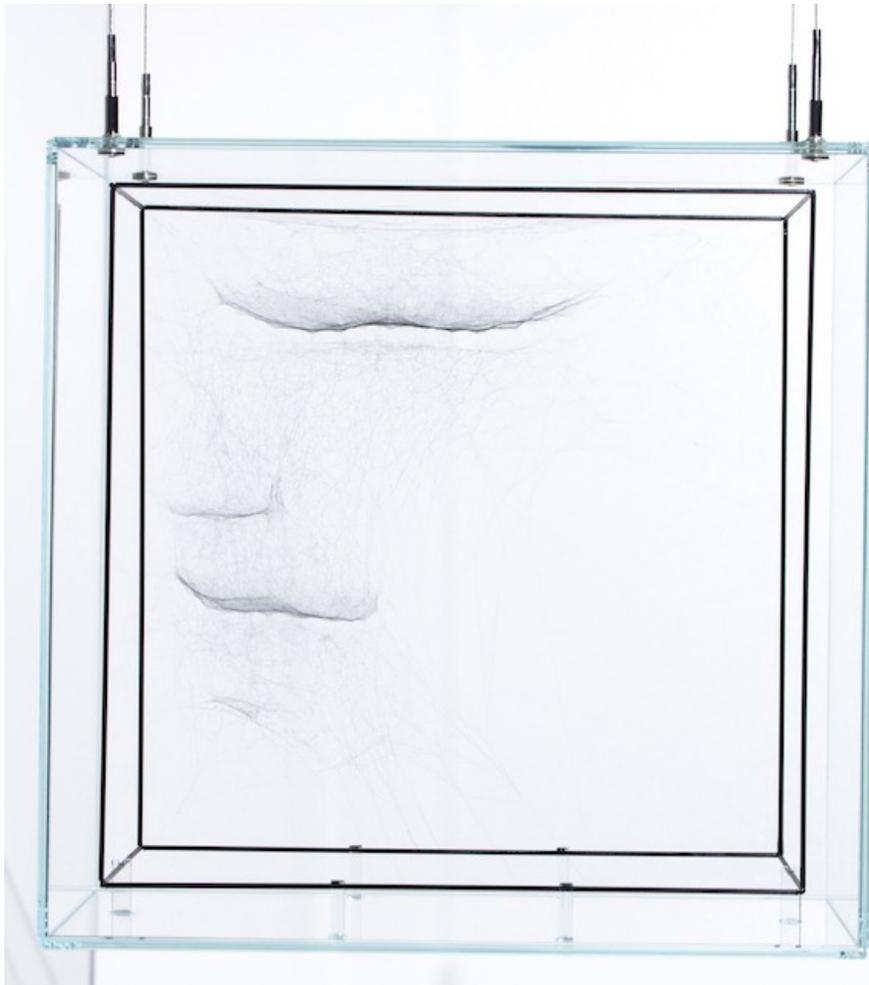
Rosa Barba's *The Color Out of Space*, a video with a sculptural installation component, similarly meditates on the material qualities of perception. A video comprised of images of space is projected through multiple panes of colored glass, interrupting the traditional viewing experience and facilitating a consideration of celestial bodies and our mediated perceptive experiences of such. With an artistic practice rooted in an interest in the physical properties of cinema, particularly celluloid film and the machinations of projection, the Berlin-based artist collaborated with scientists at the Hirsch Observatory at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute to create the work.

Camille Henrot's *Grosse Fatigue*, another interdisciplinary, artistic and scientific collaboration, was created as a part of the Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship program. The video is another reflection on the human endeavor to record and make meaning of our experience of the world. During her time at the Smithsonian, Henrot became overwhelmed by the vast amount of information held within the institution's archive, and its ambitious mission of "increasing knowledge." The artist processed this deluge of information by creating *Grosse Fatigue*. From the perspective of a frenetic screen capture of a computer desktop, the 13-minute video juxtaposes footage of the Smithsonian's collection with a voice-over narrating a constructed creation myth, culling elements from religious, historic and scientific understandings of human origins, making apparent tensions between humanity's observed knowledge of the world and our attempts to narrativize such.

Tomás Saraceno's *Cloud Cities: Nebulous Thresholds*, a site-specific sculpture commissioned as the newest addition to the Alfond Collection of Contemporary Art, represents a utopian narrativization of the future of

human existence. The sculpture appears to float weightlessly from the glass, domed ceiling of the Alford Inn, casting iridescent, cotton-candy-colored light in the space. Part of a larger body of work of sculptural manifestations of Saraceno's vision of modular, sustainable dwellings for a humanity of the future, *Cloud Cities* envisions a utopia built out of a greater awareness of the connectivity between humans and the environment.

Another work of Saraceno's in the exhibition, descriptively titled *Hybrid Dark Semi-Social Semi-Social Semi-Social Semi-Social Semi-Social Cluster Alderamin Built By: a Solo Cyrtophora Citricola – Four Weeks, a Solo Cyrtophora Citricola Juvenile – Two Weeks, a Duet of Cyrtophora Citricola Juveniles – Two Weeks, a Quartet Cyrtophora Juveniles – One week, A Solo Cyrtophora Citricola – One Week, rotated 90 degrees* (pictured at left) looks to the architectural ingenuity of spider webs in the artist's examination of the structures that create a foundation for our existence in the universe. The sculpture, part of a series titled "Hybrid Webs," is a web woven by spiders in Saraceno's care, displayed in a clear, suspended cube. To create these sculptures, Saraceno adjusts the orientation of the structures housing the spiders as they weave, and records these adjustments as well as information about the spider collaborators in the titles of the finished sculptures. The artist describes their poetic quality on his website: "as cosmic dust deposits on the webs, intricate filaments allude to dwarf and spiral galaxies, nebulae and quasars. Spiders spin tiny Universes."



- From "Hybrid Webs" series by Tomas Saraceno

Artistic and scientific observation are both disciplines which seek a greater understanding of our place in the universe as humans. The artists represented in *Time as Landscape* are particularly attuned to the rigors of their specific processes, as well as the geological and temporal venues in which these processes exist; they record and organize the material presence of the natural world, they examine the effects of mediated experience, they expose the futility of organizing the infinite, and they imagine how utopia could be built.