be part of the art

\[ \text{in'tər-ək'tɪv} \]

november 8—december 15, 2006


d\text{urred b}y
gianluca bianchino
jeanne brasile
asha ganpat

walsh gallery
seton hall university
300 s. orange ave, south orange, nj 07079

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In a traditional sense, art has always depended upon a boundary between the viewer and the work of art. The artist’s role was to conceive and create art, while the viewer’s role was to contemplate it. The spectator responded to art by quietly reflecting upon its beauty or scrutinizing its elements in an attempt to make connections between the formal and critical elements of the work and the higher ideals of our society. Visits to a museum or gallery were solemn events.

My goal in presenting \text{in’tər-ək’tɪv} is to place the viewer as the central focus of the art, to break down the barrier between art and everyday life as well as the barrier between artist and viewer. In this exhibition, the viewer is a critical part of the art. In fact, this art demands participation by the viewer. Without viewer input, the central meaning of the art would be lost. The audience, or user, is encouraged to make changes to the art, affecting its presentation, making creative decisions in some instances, thereby changing the composition of the art.
The artists featured in in’tar-åk’tiv incorporate the viewer into the artistic process by different means. One method employed is when the artist provides forms which the viewer re-combines, therefore recreating the formal elements of the art. Another means of interactivity is one in which the artist provides visual, as well as other sensory feedback, of the audience’s movements or choices. Still yet another means is one where the viewer must uncover hidden elements of the work by entering it or manipulating it to discover the intrinsic possibilities. Each of these methods produces an environment that is dependent upon the viewer to unlock the full expression and meaning of the art. Thus the artist becomes dependent upon the viewer to complete the piece.

These artistic strategies construct an atmosphere of wonder and play, creating an environment where fun is at a premium, something that is usually more associated with theme parks or game- playing. I’ve had a great deal of fun putting this exhibition together. I hope you will have as much enjoyment interacting with the art and unlocking its possibilities.

Jeanne Brasile, Director – Walsh Gallery
Sungjin Choi – “Heater”
Choi selects forms that serve as an awkward signifier of meaning, intervention or confusion. Coming across his incidental forms, viewers are forced to contemplate his use of domestic objects and their own human relationships. By doing this, Choi asks questions about personal identity and conditions of humanity.

Seth Goodwin – “Tooth Turner 2”
Seth Goodwin is a sculptor who works with a variety of materials including metal, wood, glass and pseudo-scientific objects. He is currently interested in the forms of teeth, which he notes, are the only exposed bone found in the body. His work deals with the manipulation of the viewer’s perception.

Dana Filbert – “Enter the Corrosive Contaminative, Disguised with Seductive Enticements”
In a world that glorifies excess, we often forget that our obsession with consumption leads to an outcome of pollution, squandered resources and frustration. Filbert sees her work as a response to her daily environment and this sculpture relates to her grueling daily commute where SUV’s and powerful trucks rule.

Brian Gustafson – “Booth”
Gustafson’s work positions him as an advocate for dialogue between the members of a community. This conversation between community members is meant to encourage compassion and empathy. The response of the viewer is meant to draw attention to their sense of self, and in turn, he asks, would this necessitate a greater sensitivity and consideration for others?

Nancy Mizuno Elliott – “Buttfest Rules, OK?”
Mining her middle-class upbringing and fascination with pop-culture, Elliott’s work is the process of constructing identity. She considers her work to be urban folk art. Elliott uses common materials and everyday situations to confront issues of the female psyche, intimacy, power, feminine aesthetics and multi-culturalism.

Nacho Montero – “Cubacho”
These pieces are about having fun and interacting with the surroundings. Wrapped in vinyl, they adhere to the concept of Montero’s recent artwork, which is to present beautiful, fun things within a vinyl (plastic) facade, representative of today’s lifestyle.

Peter Mallo – “Mirror Box”
The Mirror Box is intended to overturn the daily ritual of mirror gazing, which gives the subject a posed and false self image. Mirror gazing perpetuates the idea of our vitality by giving a 2-D reproduction that will always face forward and return the gaze, confirming our existence by coupling it with an image.

Asha Ganpat – “Buy and Save”
Lately, I am most interested in the psychological experience of social/cultural conditioning. Through my sculptures I am looking at: symbols, power over the mind and senses, the relationship between internal and external spirituality, (those who are) turning faith into a commodity, spoken and written words as down fall of humanity.

Carl Gombert – “The Real Me”
Although this work is pastel and acrylic on canvas, Gombert’s presentation is highly interactive. By asking the viewer to fill out a questionnaire, he addresses the difficulty of individual biases, reactions and perceptions that we all struggle with.
Yuichiro Nishizawa – “Cohabitation”
“I view my work as planting a seed. Whether or not the seed blossoms depends upon the viewer. My work is only fully realized through the interaction of the viewer – with the work, with others in space – and through the the work may provoke, the memories it may recall. My hope is to provide an experience that brings the viewer to questions, furthers their own spirit of inquiry, engages their curiosity, makes them imagine.”

Sarah Nicole Phillips – “Heliotropia”
The interactivity (of this work) may give viewers pause, leading them to contemplate their own involvement in this event of energy consumption and production. All electrical components are revealed so that the viewer may easily trace the relationship of their action to the plants’ reactions.

Catya Plate – “Play It By Ear”
Interdisciplinary in nature, Plate’s work crosses the boundaries between art and science not only to question, but to enrich the methods of both disciplines. She uses the triptych format, which references Middle Age altar paintings to expose and investigate what is beneath the surface. The subcutaneous parts are in the open, but in a deeper sense, cultural and social taboos are also exposed.

Robert Silverman – “Abstract Evolution”
Silberman’s deceptively fun work has origins in a multiplicity of disciplines that meet at a place called art. This work represents the melding of biology, math, esthetics and computer imaging. Each piece it generates in response to the viewer is truly unique. Your piece is already there, just waiting to be found.

Lisa Suss – “World Game”
Like the current state of our complex world, this game is not what it seems. Suss’ art addresses our awkward perceptions of current controversial topics by alluding to and underlying political context. Her work reflects our skewed view of the contemporary world.

Jessica Teckemeyer – “Pink Feathers”
This piece challenges viewers to discover its entirety. Those who explore the work fully will be rewarded with a sensual experience. For those who neither choose to explore or unlock its hidden secret, there is still the possibility that they will view the work in a different way, as it changes form every time a viewer enters it. Teckemeyer explores the idea of experience and the relationship of viewer to the object.

Steven Rossi – “46 Degrees”
Rossi’s juxtaposition of images from popular culture with a children’s toy relates to the oversimplification of news broadcasts and other transmitted information much the same way that adults reduce information they share with children to its most basic meaning. The audience is invited to view the images and make their own connections between the visual information provided by the artist.

Florence Weisz – “BushhusB Interactive”
“I am fascinated by the endless permutations generated simply by mirroring, multiplying and reassembling the nine features of one person’s face.” Weisz views this installation as a chance to participate in a democratic opportunity of self-expression, fun and experimentation.
"interactive"

is:

invited artists  juried artists

john avelluto    justin bursk
shannon bellum   sungjin Choi
jamie evans      nancy elliott
carla gomberg    dana filibert
asha ganpat      carl  gomberg
seth goodwin     yuichiro nishizawa
brian gustafson   catya plate
peter mallo       steven rossi
nacho montero    lisa suss
sarah nicole phillips  jessica teckemeyer
robert silverman  florence weisz