

PREVIOUS PROJECT \ INFLUX GALLERY BALTIMORE MD

THE SPACE

In/FLUX Gallery is an abandoned bank located in downtown Baltimore, Maryland USA. In Spring 2012, I was invited to create and install artworks in this space along with three other artists. The building is located in a high traffic area, surrounded by convenience stores, restaurants, and bars. There were many large windows through which the interior of the space was visible to pedestrians, and we used these as opportunities to connect with the public. The window I chose to work with faced the rear alley behind the building where people gathered waiting for the light rail (public transportation system). My projects were meditations on the research I was doing at the time into predictive models of climate change as well as the nuclear disaster that occurred in Fukushima Daiichi in 2011.

THE WORK:

EVEN BRIGHTER THAN THE MOON (IN PURSUIT OF LIMITLESS POWER)

In this video installation, modified footage from Katy Perry's "Fireworks" music video was projected over a pulsing image of a nuclear reactor illuminated by the seductive blue glow of Cherenkov radiation. The projection was visible from the street in front of the gallery, and its audio reverberated through the space. The imagery from both videos represent pursuit of limitless power and dominance over nature; one a cultural/personal attempt, the other scientific/technological. Two screens opposite this display model the plume of cesium 136 that was dispersed into the atmosphere after the nuclear explosions at Fukushima Daiichi in 2011. Visitors described the experience as entrancing and sublime.

CREATION MYTH

This piece was intended to create a dialogue between the interior of the gallery, and the city outside. From outside the building, people waiting to ride the train home from work saw a neon blue sign in the window, "there's no place like home." The words were cut into a plywood sheet which was used to board up the window, a common sight in Baltimore where over 60% of homes are vacant in some neighborhoods. From inside the gallery you see the inner workings of the sign, florescent bulbs, wires, ballast, attached to the back of the plywood. Two LED displays floating in front of the lights are illuminated by them. The screen on the left shows a diagram of past and future global temperature changes starting in the 1800's (the beginning of the industrial revolution) and ending in 2100. The right screen displays a date corresponding to the model on the left, ticking up one year each second. Opposing these screens, projected on the wall are silent excerpts from pop star Willow Smith's music video, "21st Century Girl." The video depicts children pulling commodities, shoes, cars, skateboards, radios, row-homes, and finally skyscrapers out of the sand in a barren desert landscape. In this way, a modern landscape manifests from "nothing." The work approaches popular culture and mass media as a record of pervasive social attitudes. The implicit message of the video is a reflection of our experience of consumerism. We are introduced to a seemingly infinite flow of novel goods in staged, climate controlled environments (theatres staffed with actors) which we can then use to construct a modern home. Their origins are mute; the systems of extraction, manufacturing, and waste disposal live beyond our immediate perception.



ABOVE: documentation of Even Brighter than the Moon, video installation at In/Flux in Baltimore MD 2012

RIGHT + BELOW: documentation photos of Creation Myth installation at In/Flux 2012

