

Waubonsee Community College Art Department and the Dickson Window Art Project Space present:

claire ashley: *muffillumps in neoorangefluopooze*

Viewing Hours:

Monday – Friday: 5:30 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.

Saturday: 6:30 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.

Sunday: 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

August 29 – November 8, 2013

Artist Talk: Thursday, October 24
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. in Von Ohlen Hall, room 201
Free and open to the general public.

Workshop: Thursday, October 24
12:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. in Von Ohlen Hall, room 201
Open to current students, registration required.*

* To register for the workshop contact the Art Coordinator, Cecilia Vargas at cvargas@waubonsee.edu or 630-466-2964.

The Dickson Window Art Project Space is located in the Dickson Center at Waubonsee Community College, Rt. 47 at Waubonsee Drive, Sugar Grove, IL 60554.

Image: Claire Ashley, installation shot from “distant landscapes: peepdyedcrevicehotpinkridge”, 2013, ICEBOX Gallery, Crane Arts Building, Philadelphia, PA, spray paint and acrylic on PVC coated canvas.

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Statement

My work inhabits the liminal space between painting, sculpture, and performance. I mine the language of painterly abstraction, monumental sculpture, slapstick humor, and pop art to transform mundane industrial materials into inflatable painted sculptures and performative props.

I am interested in the assumptions and history of both painting and sculpture. I create objects that engage in intellectual play, testing the boundaries and expectations of each medium, while exploring the possibilities of low-brow, mundane, unconventional materials. I am interested in how objects “look” as opposed to “how” they are created i.e. the appearance of abstract painting visualized through industrial materials and sculptural form. I combine expressive painting in opposition to the linearity and the rigidity of adhesive tape and vinyl stencils.

I have explored many approaches to object making to get at my desire for this conglomeration. In so doing, my work with inflatables has been the most satisfying. I find the inflatable form compelling, as it exists in two states: both as flaccid skin and taut volume. I think of the polarities of form within these objects as metaphors for our bodies: inhaling/exhaling; taut/wrinkled skin; flaccid/erect organs etc. In addition I am interested in how a body can activate sculpture, and how the ‘prop’ abstracts and extends that body. I think of the scale and weight of the object when carried as a reference to a turtle carrying it’s home or to Atlas carrying the world: a metaphor for the responsibilities we bear.

I have always been interested in the physicality of surface, the material voice of an object, and the pattern, structure, and metaphor of the grid. My early work included paintings of large tartan-like grid patterns: a response to my Scottish heritage, and Rauschenberg inspired ‘combine’ paintings: early attempts to bridge painting and sculpture. But when I had kids, the early grid acquired meaning in reference to forms of familial containment, protection, and nurture.

My work over the past ten years has evolved out of an examination of domestic objects of comfort and play. This impetus has led me to explore forms that include: my home, pillows, mattresses, and airbags, as symbols of comfort, and protection/over-protection. My recent work has used silhouette shapes from architectural fragments of my home as a starting point from which an inflatable form is stitched. These architectural fragments once inflated become figurative: a reference to the people who dwell inside them, and the thing that makes a house a home.

Bio

Artist, Claire Ashley, will be featured in the Dickson Window Art Project Space from August 29 to November 8, 2013. Ashley received her MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (Chicago, IL), and her BFA from Gray’s School of Art (Aberdeen, Scotland). Originally from Edinburgh, Scotland, this artist is now Chicago based. Currently, she teaches at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in the Department of Contemporary Practices, and the Department of Painting and Drawing.

Ashley’s work is often playfully curious. Her recent works have been investigating inflatables as painting, sculpture, installation and performance costume. These works have been exhibited nationally and internationally in galleries, museums, and site-specific installations, performances and collaborations. Nationally, the artwork has been featured at venues such as Bahamas Biennial (Milwaukee, WI), Art Santa Fe (Santa Fe, NM), Rockford Art Museum (Rockford, IL), Arizona State University Museum (Phoenix, AZ), DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum (Lincoln, MA), and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. Additionally, her work has been exhibited in Scotland at The House for an Art Lover (Glasgow), gallerA1 (Edinburgh), and The Highland Institute for Contemporary Art (Inverness).