

Workaday Ghosts – Peter Goché

Drawing is an emancipatory practice in which one is set free from legal, social or political restrictions; liberation. It is an immersive act, to which I refer as a sentient-based labor. Operating beyond the two-dimensional plane, and sourcing derelict materials as medium, the consequent body of work yields an incomplete set of 1:1 drawing assemblies with the relative capacity to unite or react or interact with the latent dimensions of our collective inherited landscape. Utilizing a range of domains as a means of exploring not only the tangible but the intangible nature of such material cultivations, the work is based on a series of modulated experimental actions (material modalities). Each work is driven by the nascent possibility of a persistent desire to intercourse with existing material surrounds pursuant a philosophical position that leverages perceptual notions of chiaroscuro - the disposition of light and dark. By extension, the conscious and unconscious, the seen and the unseen, focus and open awareness, and the made un-made as factors in the realm of understanding and producing space. It is a full-scale, three-dimensional methodology conducted parallel to meditative and photographic documentation as a means to explore its affects (immaterial harmonics). The installation art/drawing project, as a perceptual practice, facilitates this philosophical operation through a creative sequence that seeks to both reveal and erase.

For more than 70 years, a billboard sat atop the one-story annex of the Argonne building in downtown Des Moines. The billboard consists of a series of staggered 1/2" dia galvanized conduit and the historic flywheel from the original Argonne elevator. The flywheel represents the industrial age and is a reference to the folks who lived in the Argonne and worked at the Ford assembly plant. The galvanized rods will create a dynamic ghostly (phenomenological) effect with respect to reflecting the sky and sun differently throughout the day/year. New linear lighting at the bottom of the art assembly will graze the rear (north) side of the galvanized rods with light at night. The existing armature will remain as is. The flywheel is made of raw cast metal and is slightly rusted. The art installation will be augmented with a situational set of artifacts from the industrial era including a vintage loudspeaker and buoy. The title of this art assembly is Workaday Ghosts.

The 12'-0" high by 36'-0" long installation is an attempt to evoke the history of this place, the draftsmanship is a development over time and serves as a visual field of reference to industrialization. The structure includes a four-story brick building and one-story annex, both built around 1915. In the 1920s, the Argonne housed workers from a factory – first the Ford Assembly Plant and later the Solar Aircraft Co. – located across the street at 1800 Grand Ave., which now houses Des Moines schools' Central Campus and Downtown School. The first floor and annex of the Argonne included retail, an auto garage and five automotive-related showrooms. The Argonne is the last remaining building containing an auto showroom on Grand Avenue. The building includes 45 apartments and street-level commercial space that is available for lease. The idea of positioning the historic flywheel from the original Argonne freight elevator in the visual field is a way of trying to recall the historical Industrial Age, which relates back to the Ford assembly plant.

The buoy is suspended right of center of the drawing field. Situated in the background, its restricted movement is perpetuated by the wind.

The loudspeaker is mounted on the east end of the service platform and is directionally in dialogue with the flywheel.