

CUE

ART FOUNDATION

The Oakes Twins

Curated by Lawrence Weschler

September 9th – October 29th, 2011

(Opening reception Saturday, September 10th, 6-8pm)

“The twins are able to trace the visual world before them, as if with a camera obscura or camera lucida, though in fact without any equipment whatsoever beyond their own visual cortexes—as one of the most significant breakthroughs in the depiction of visual space since the Renaissance...”

—Lawrence Weschler

Bringing it All Back Home, 2009-2010
Archival pigment ink on concave paper
21" x 20" x 10"
Collection of Lisa Ware and Ronald Drucker



Ryan and Trevor Oakes steadfastly pursue a deep and intimate understanding of visual perception and depiction, their investigations generally taking the form of drawings, paintings and sculptures consisting of various media that function as solutions for the questions and tests they propose for themselves. Intellectually rigorous and truly collective in their process, The Oakes Twins' ambitious practice involves ongoing conversations surrounding concepts like peripheral vision, depth perception and light phenomena coupled with methodical, laborious studies that often involve long hours and much practice. The result is invariably impressive and visually stimulating, precise beyond what one would think possible and clear in the amount of minute detail and time put into every aspect of their work.

Bringing It All Back Home: The Cooper Union (left, 2009-2010) is a product of The Oakes Twins' interest in binocular vision. Namely, the phenomenon that occurs when you look past an object in the foreground to focus on an object further away and the object in the foreground is split in two and both objects become transparent. The artists learned that by harnessing this double-image vision, made possible with a customized, curved easel and attached, rotatable head rest, they could depict what they see in remarkably accurate proportion and perspective. By drawing a bustling area of New York City full of pedestrians, trees and differing architecture, The Oakes Twins successfully prove that their technique can be applied to the most complicated of scenes. Additionally, the canvas' concave shape matches the curvature of one's eye, thus allowing for an even greater accuracy in scale and a more realistic experience for the viewer. In *Cardboard Sculpture* (right, 2003), the artists demonstrate how we see the world through spherical splays of light rays by using layers of corrugated cardboard to construct a curved plane. All of the corrugated tubes within the cardboard aim toward the same center point and, when viewed from that point, the entire piece becomes transparent, while if seen from any other vantage point it seems opaque.

On view at CUE Art Foundation, The Oakes Twins' first solo exhibition in New York, will include over forty examples from their many projects, including sculptures and drawings investigating the physics of light and color, center-points, and other visual phenomena. Through all of these works, The Oakes Twins innovatively share with the viewer what it truly means for us to see.



Cardboard Sculpture, 2003
Corrugated cardboard, paper shims and glue
21" x 70" x 10"
Collection of David Salomon

(More, over)

For additional information, please contact Ryan Thomas, Programs Coordinator, CUE Art Foundation, 212-206-3583, or email ryan.thomas@cueartfoundation.org

Free catalogues available.

Exhibition-related Programming:

The Oakes Twins in Conversation with Lawrence Weschler

In celebration of Weschler's publication of his newest collection of essays, *Uncanny Valley: Adventures in the Narrative*, which includes his profile on The Oakes Twins.

Saturday, October 22nd, 2pm

FREE and open to the public.

Copies of *Uncanny Valley: Adventures in the Narrative* will be available for purchase courtesy of 192 Books.

ARTIST'S BIO:

Colorado-born visual artists and twin brothers, Ryan and Trevor Oakes, have been engaged in a conversation about the nuances of vision since they were children. They explored their mutual fascination with vision throughout grade school and during college at Cooper Union's School of Art in New York City. Since graduating in 2004, they've continued their dialogue through a body of jointly built art pieces that address human vision, light, perception, and the experience of space and depth in the particular way they have come to understand it.

The Oakes' artwork is held in the permanent collections of The Field Museum and the Spertus Museum in Chicago. Their public art projects include a large-scale outdoor sculpture that debuted in Chicago's Millennium Park in the summer of 2009, and is now installed at O'Hare International Airport. They have exhibited and lectured about their artwork across the United States and abroad, most recently working with the Palazzo Strozzi Museum in Florence, Italy, during the summer of 2011.

In the fall of 2011 the brothers will do a drawing project at the Getty Center in Los Angeles. In the winter of 2012 they will be in residence creating an installation at The Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC) in Troy, New York. In the fall of 2012 they're invited back to Florence, Italy, to re-envision an artwork of Brunelleschi, creator of the first perspective experiment on the books, demonstrated around 1425.

About CUE:

CUE Art Foundation is a non-profit arts organization dedicated to promoting culture by supporting the creativity of under-recognized visual artists by offering comprehensive arts education programming for artists and students, and interdisciplinary arts events for public audiences.

This exhibition is supported in part by:



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