

Ceremonial Objects, Devices and Forms

Bridgette Mayer Gallery

Philadelphia, PA

November 2009

The Bridgette Mayer Gallery show *Ceremonial Objects, Devices and Forms* represents an 18 month journey and a significant conceptual shift from the work of the previous show. The April 2008 exhibition formally presented the temple theme, my own vision of an architectural locus or passage for the human spirit. Not unlike the pyramids of Egypt, the temple is a machine that transports the viewer metaphorically or metaphysically to realms of consciousness beyond that of the everyday. This temple, however, is an equal opportunity conduit not just for pharaohs and court attendants. Just as the pyramids contained richly decorated articles of everyday life to accompany the pharaohs to the other world, this current body of work presents objects removed from within the imagined temple interior. In *Ceremonial Objects, Devices and Forms*, the viewer is encouraged to imagine how they themselves might utilize the various exhibited items in their own imagined journey. It is not my intention to suggest how these works of art might be employed nor is it my purpose to describe how that journey might unfold. It is my desire to provide a place for everyone to gather for and initiate their own unique imaginative transformation.

With that said, artistically speaking, this show focuses on my interest in conceptual art as worked through more traditional artistic media including ritualized craft. In college, I spent my senior year focused on independent studies in conceptual art. In the spring of that year, I produced 3 shows of my own

conceptual art, as well as, participated in multimedia group projects and performances involving the development of ritual, costume, music/sound and performance. At the end of the projects, each of us took all of our creations and infiltrated a farm in Central Kentucky and established a community of artist for a day. Frustrated by the lack of physical connectedness amongst all the participants, I purchased miles of string and set about tying the entire property and participants into a network of lines. Once established, I traveled that network with a typewriter, dressed as a torn fabric covered shaman/scribe, relaying messages between participants.

In this current body of work, I find myself informed by those experiences, 30 plus years later. I find I am drawn to wiring things together, tying together disparate elements that might have had a most casual relationship, and tapping into the strings, fabric or lines of energy that constitute (whether metaphorically, spiritually or physically) the infinite universes we inhabit. Each piece is an exploration of intuited connections with ancient and aboriginal cultures and practices. At the same time, each work is a statement of the possibilities and grounding that art can provide in an age of ever accelerating human and global activity. In *Dialogue with the Mind of a Child*, I combined formal themes I explored in college with the imaginative drawings of a child done on the pages of a children's religious education book. I imagined that inspired child (50 to 100 years ago), crayon in hand, boldly and fearlessly marking up his or her book. I feel I joined with that child and playfully collaborated on the current piece and in so doing, dissolved time. If there is anything that informs this work, it is the delight of discovery, chance and play in the rituals of creating art (or anything for that matter).