

Exhibition Proposal

Ryan Roa - Constant Velocity

EXHIBITION NARRATIVE

In “**Constant Velocity**” artist Ryan Roa implicates viewers into his investigations of energy and space. The site-responsive installations are made entirely of black rubber bungee cords. Using a basic vocabulary of forms – wedges, pyramids and cones – in a variety of configurations, the artist stretches the cords from opposing planes (walls, ceilings and floors) creating tension transmitted via the flexible rubber material. The straight lines of the taut rubber bungees combine to create a series of overlapping forms that are meant to be seen from varying vantage points, producing a series of moiré patterns as viewers navigate Roa’s series of ***Space Drawings***. Leaving space between each arrangement, Roa presents viewers with elements that can be read as individual sculptures or cumulatively, as an installation. The individual forms are sympathetically arranged in the gallery to complement and challenge existing architectural features.

Drawing with the bungees in three-dimensional space, Roa references forms derived from ancient and classical architecture. Utilized since the advent of building construction, the wedge, pyramid and cone have been used in temples, mastabas, stupas and other iconic structures to displace gravity, creating equilibrium between opposing forces of expansion and compression. The stretched bungee cords create similarly offset opposing forces, although their utilitarian associations lack the grandeur of the materials employed in the construction of the monolithic buildings. Roa simultaneously undermines associations to historical architecture by using dimensions that more closely reference human scale. In doing so, he calls to attention the experience of movement through surroundings, as well as the viewers’ relationship to space and objects within it.

Once installed, the bungees hang in a state of suspended energy, capturing the artist’s exertions to wrestle the elastic lines into place. Pushing the bungees to the limits of their capacity, they are pulled tightly from opposing points within the gallery. The bungees concomitantly push the gallery architecture to its limits and the artist adjusts the tension of each piece to accommodate architectural constraints. Challenging material and space, Roa finds stasis in the area where compression and tension are equal, or in constant velocity, creating a precarious state where energy is temporarily stored in the bungees.

This sense of impending movement, or perhaps danger, is echoed in the functionality of the bungees. Ordinarily used to secure objects, they are often used to avoid risk or harm by constraint. Their black tone and austere metal hardware hooks reinforce cultural associations with peril. Stretched throughout the gallery, the rubber materials have an inherently palpable capacity to spring reflexively from their affixed points, paradoxically, at odds with their purpose. This sense of danger is echoed in the warning inconspicuously stamped on each bungee cautioning users of load capacity and possible failure which may result in injury.

Poised between motion and a state of rest, the bungees evoke movement vis- à- vis their elasticity and dynamic installation with multifarious rhythms and vectors. Roa arranges the forms to construct passages and obstructions, obliging viewers to respond by negotiating the overlapping forms and lines.

Each enactment of the ***Space Drawings*** is but one of the infinite experiences and relationships formed by moving through and around the work.

Conflation of the potential energy stored in the bungees against the kinetic energy of the artist's and visitors' enacting of the work is the main narrative impulse of the exhibition. However, the relationship between object, space and individual is equally paramount to Roa's concerns. Reading further into subtexts of the work, the artist forms a series of complex, yet understated associations between iconic structures, geometry and physics presented in a limited variety of materials and formal lexicons.

Compositionally, "***Constant Velocity***" consists of four basic recurring structures arranged in six to eight vignettes. ***Space Drawing 26*** approximates a deconstructed, upside-down pyramid from a frontal vantage point. When seen from the side, the pyramid shape collapses into a skewed triangle bisected by a strong line through its center. The tension in the bungees is echoed in the precarious shape resting on point. ***Space Drawing 27*** is comprised of a pair, or arrangements of pairs, of elongated isosceles pyramids with bases stretched between planes (walls, floor, and ceiling.) The pyramids meet mid-air at their points, joined by metal hardware. The bungees line the vertical edges of each pyramid, the termini affixed to hefty eye hooks. In ***Space Drawing 28*** Roa outlines not just the contours of the shape, but also the sides and interior, presenting another dynamic form that implies more density than the two previous drawings. This larger, skewed pyramidal form is again investigated by the artist in ***Space Drawing 30***, which is comprised of two, skewed wedges sharing the same base, but diverging into two separate points set on perpendicular planes. Other variants of these ***Space Drawings*** may be included as necessitated by the architecture and space of the gallery.

This gallery installation is to be accompanied by a large-scale ***Space Drawing*** in the atrium of the Berry Center, with numerous bungees attached to three points in the ceiling, each terminating on the second floor balcony wall. This will form three converging conical shapes with irregular elements. This variant is conceived specifically for this site, energizing public space on all floors of the Berry Center. Vantage points from the first floor looking up, or the second floor looking either up or down, offer dramatic perspectives that are unachievable in the gallery. Another crucial variant will be the longer runs of interlocking bungee cords which will be quite visibly and structurally different in terms of tension than those of the smaller ***Space Drawings 26, 27, 28*** and ***30***. Subtle visible movement in the cords hint at the stored energy waiting to be released as these more slack rubber lines will respond to the kinetic energy transmitted throughout the active Berry Center.

Lastly, video documentation of the artist installing the drawings will be played on a loop on the second floor to both contextualize the public installation as well as promote the exhibition outside of the gallery proper. Alternatively, there can be a podcast that visitors may be directed to by use of a QR code on a wall label or object label. The URL can also be embedded within the gallery's website to provide remote access to the video. While not specifically part of the installation, the accompanying video documentation will demonstrate the physicality required to make the ***Space Drawings*** and the transformation of Roa's actions into stored energy held by the bungees until they are released.

TIMELINE

Ideally, we seek to exhibit this show in spring or fall of 2014 to allow time for planning and execution as well as to seek sources of funding beyond normal budgetary expenditures for more robust versions of the anticipated catalogue and programs.

PROGRAMMING

Projected programming for this exhibition consists of an artist talk directed at both art students and the general public. Curator Jeanne Brasile will facilitate this talk. The curator would also be available to discuss gallery management or any other aspect of curating and exhibition development with students studying art history, fine art, design or enrolled in gallery management classes. She will actively seek to work with faculty to interpret the exhibition in contexts that facilitate varying curricula.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

The production of a modest tri-fold catalogue or, if funds permit, a catalogue with perfect binding, a greater number of images and multiple essays from the curator as well as scholars familiar with Ryan Roa's work. The podcast/video accompaniment provides an additional context in which to interpret the work and could be tailored to meet curricula. Professors would be encouraged to attend the exhibition and include it as coursework. The artist talk would also be recorded on video as another means to document the exhibition. It could be linked to the gallery website from the college server or a provider such as Vimeo or Youtube.

AUDIENCE

The exhibition is geared to appeal to the core constituency of community members, faculty, staff and students; particularly those studying Fine Art and Art History. Both the artist and curator have audience bases in Essex, Passaic and Hudson Counties in New Jersey as well Brooklyn and Manhattan. A vigorous public relations campaign would include direct email, direct postcard mailings, social media and press releases distributed to such individuals, art blogs, specific art critics, curators and patrons. Class visits by Seton Hall University graduate students in the Museum Studies program will integrate the exhibition into coursework, further bolstering visitation.

"Constant Velocity" Exhibition Budget

DESCRIPTION	ITEMIZATION	SUBTOTAL	TOTAL
Gallery Preparation			
Installation Hardware	O-Rings, Eyehooks, Anchors, etc.	\$150.00	\$150.00
Gallery Prep	Spackle, Sand Paper, etc.	\$25.00	\$25.00
		Gallery Preparation SUBTOTAL:	\$175.00
Printed Material			
Postcards	5000	\$160.00	\$160.00
Postage	.33 x 2000	\$660.00	\$820.00
Posters	.50 x 50	\$25.00	\$845.00
Exhibition Brochure	500 pieces	\$305.00	\$1150.00
Text Panel	1	\$300.00	\$1450.00
Vinyl Letters (title)	1	\$100.00	\$1550.00
		Printed Material SUBTOTAL:	\$1550.00
Personnel			
Artist Honoraria	Artist Talk + travel, time, expenses	\$600.00	\$600.00
Curator Honoraria	Travel, time, expenses	\$600.00	\$1200.00
		Personnel SUBTOTAL:	\$1200.00
Reception Food/Drink			
Food – Reception	3 platters	\$300.00	\$300.00
Wine - Reception	75 x 3	\$225.00	\$525.00
Food/Drink for Attendees Artist Talk		\$150.00	\$675.00
		Reception Food/Drink SUBTOTAL:	\$675.00
		TOTAL EXHIBITION BUDGET:	\$3600.00

IMAGES (see attached disk)



Space Drawing #26, rubber bungee cords and hardware,
9' x 8' x 5', 2012



Space Drawing #26 (alternate view)



Space Drawing #27, rubber bungee cords and hardware, dimensions variable, 2012



Space Drawing #28, rubber bungee cords and hardware, 96" x 48" x height of ceiling, 2012



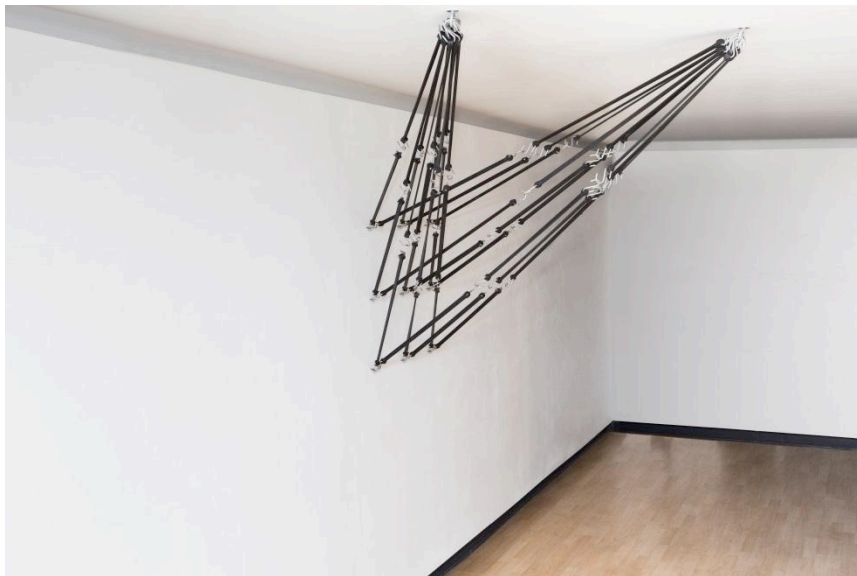
Space Drawing #28 (alternate view)



Space Drawing #30
rubber bungee cords and hardware, height of the ceiling x 7' x 5', 2013



Space Drawing #30 (alternate view)



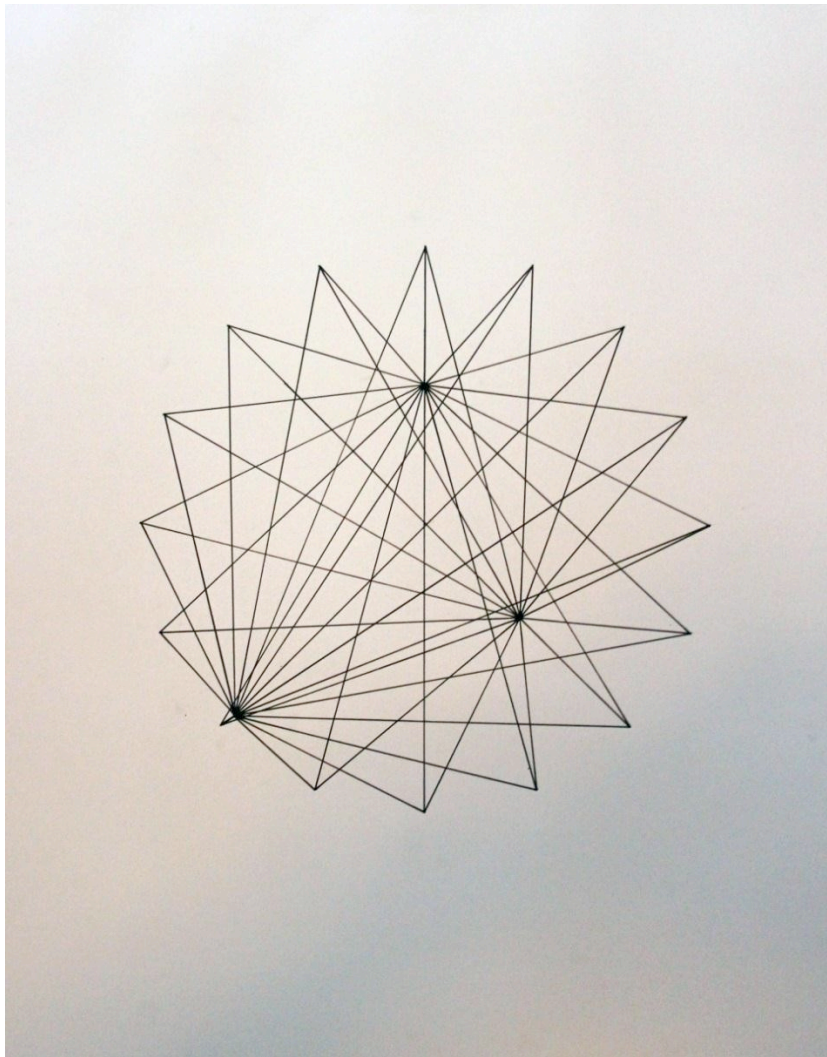
Space Drawing #30 (alternate view)



Space Drawing #30 (alternate view)



Space Drawing #29
 Rubber bungee cords and hardware,
 dimensions variable, 2013



Space Drawing (study for proposed installation in (omitted) Center atrium)
rubber bungee cords and hardware, dimensions variable, 2013