

In Spring 2013, Clemens Klinkert (MFA 2014) transformed the bare walls of SUGs' Gallery X into a charged visual environment for mental introspection. A departure from his immersive painted room installations, *Transcending Space* combined multiple elements of Klinkert's diverse practice, resulting in a synthesis of forms and media that destabilized boundaries between the physical and the psychological. Below Klinkert details the significance of meditation and his desire to transcend the material realm.

HB: Can you talk about your inspiration for the exhibition? What's the significance of the title, *Transcending Space*, in the relation to the conceptual framework of your show?

CK: My aim was to create a holistic environment that would transform the viewer's spatial perception of the gallery. As I worked on the show, it took on more of a psychological edge. I was thinking about transforming the physical space into a mental space. That's where the title comes in. My current work is also more figurative than it was in the past. My thinking used to be rather formal, where most considerations were executed in terms of space. That's another dimension of the title, me transcending that approach to think solely in terms of physical space.

HB: You've said before that you wanted to situate the viewer in a sort of meditative or contemplative state. How is this interplay between the mental and the physical emphasized in your work?

CK: As it evolved, the show became more and more about introspection. I started a meditation practice of my own over a year ago, which is why I included the pendulum piece on the floor. It really made sense in relation to meditation because the mark is all about centering. To me, the meditation process is really valuable. It allows me to look at myself in a different light, more critically. I wanted to give the viewer a similar experience, where, upon entering the space, they'd become fully aware of themselves. When you walk into the gallery, you see the bust mural and the doodle drawing blown up to a massive scale. At the same time, the small paintings and sculpture relate to the body. I wanted to throw off the viewer's perception of scale and force them to think in a mental way, rather than a physical way. I want to force the viewer to introspect on a basic level.

HB: You also play with repeated forms and shapes, like the small bust-shaped painting, for instance, which is referenced in the wall mural. This produces a sort of disorienting, uncanny effect.

CK: I wanted to create a dialogue or narrative between the pieces. The bust painting was something I did last semester. It's an abstract reduction of a bust of Marcus Aurelius that I saw in the Art Institute. I work on shaped canvases and have gotten into the habit of seeing things in terms of their outline. I was really compelled by the shape of the bust. It's mirrored in a distorted, drawn out way in the second big mural painting. The visual effect is similar to a movie screen. I was interested in this

literal shift from the figure to a wide screen figure. It was also a way of setting up a dialogue: including a piece and also a distorted version of that piece. This brings up a whole psychological dimension that relates to questions of the ego and how we perceive ourselves.

HB: Through they each stand on their own, the separate elements in the show seem to be in direct communication with one and another. There's definitely a palpable rhythm that circulates through the gallery. Can you talk more about the different dialogues that exist between the works in the space?

CK: The circular floor piece is really central to the exhibition. It was one of the only things that I was really set on in the beginning, so it really shaped the look of the exhibition in a lot of ways. I see it as a void that really draws in a lot of the room's energy. I wanted to create a rhythm that would connect to the floor piece with my wall mural. The doodle drawings on the wall have a rougher, more chaotic quality as opposed to the tightly controlled lines in the floor piece. The two works contrast greatly and sort of set each other off. There's a lot of black and white in the show, which goes back to my intention to create a holistic environment or charged space. The few notes of color in the show—the sculptural X piece and the blue shape painting—really stand out. These two pieces talk to each other, too, because they're roughly similar shapes projecting outwards.

HB: *Transcending Space* incorporates a variety of different mediums. In this way it's very different from your previous installations, like *Existential Doodle* from 2012, for example, the large painted room mural.

CK: *Transcending Space* is a lot different in that it incorporates three of four different elements of my studio practice. For me, this exhibition has been a great experiment. I've had the opportunity to combine aspects that I've kept separate and see if they could produce something greater than just the sum of their parts. I think I did that. There are many different angles from which you can approach the show. It's given me a lot of new ideas for future plans, too.