

ARTS

"Dave Culpepper: Wake Me When It's Quitting Time"

Even as Dave Culpepper dreams about our future in space, he humorously points out our present decline

REVIEWED BY CAITLIN GREENWOOD, FRI., OCT. 17, 2014

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Co-Lab Project Space, 613 Allen

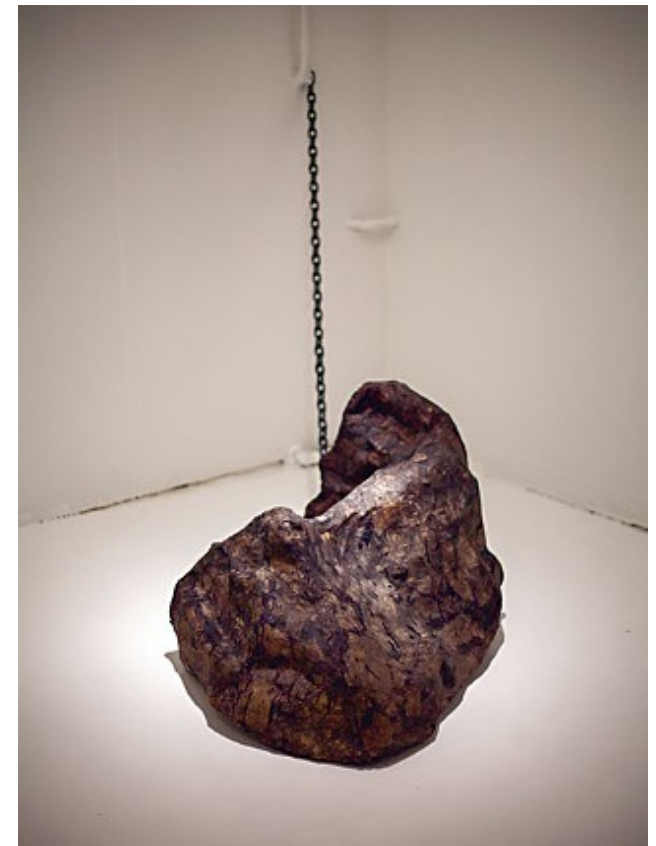
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Through Oct. 18

Forget space; David Culpepper might be the final frontier. His latest exhibition, "Wake Me When It's Quitting Time," toes a coy line of exploring the aesthetic of future space habitats while also including distinctive nods to the inefficacies of the human race that will leave their mark on our next planetary venture.

Culpepper has shown with the group Ink Tank during his brief tenure in Austin, but he's hit a new stride in his solo showings. Namely, his facility as a sculptor has grown to allow for his conceptual themes to achieve fulfillment with their fun and complex nuance intact. Culpepper noted that space and humor are two themes he looks to string throughout most of his work; space offers imagination, while humor is a universal language with which to communicate the widening reach of the former. On display, jagged, fragmented caskets jut out of the gallery walls, one bearing a car freshener with the caption "Courage." Portraits of the lunar landscape, complete with double-paned glass, show a cozy version of our future homes. 3-D space fruit floats just above the gallery floors.

In these works, Culpepper focuses on the bristling edge of temporality especially as it grates on the meaning we imbue to artifacts. There's liberation in finding that significance decays over time, no matter how precious we envision the original artifact to be. Culpepper doesn't shirk from pointing out the futility in aspiring toward immortality.



His points about personhood and inevitable decline, told through the story of our space explorations, are cleverly conveyed. "Wake Me When It's Quitting Time" will have you dreaming about what is at stake for our future but grounded soundly in the present. As far as Culpepper is concerned, we're having a lot of fun as is.

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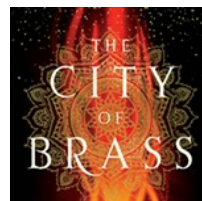
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