

Reflecting Pool



How can a video be a reflecting pool?

Reflecting is a word with a double-meaning: it means both to throw back light, like a mirror, or to think deeply.

These videos are a respite from the glamorous, message-laden large projection and the babble of voices telling their stories on the gallery walls.

With this circular projection on the floor, the artist invites visitors to experience small and extraordinary moments: falling snow, feet in melting ice, ladybugs on a branch in the wind, a dead deer. Such are the brief and insignificant moments that often are the source of joy and true meaning in our lives.

Do not step on the circle!

Explore This Exhibition

QR code

view the QR code through your smartphone camera to access online exhibition materials



audio tour*

*audio tour transcript available - please inquire with staff



(Clockwise from top left): Yvonne Neigas, Lisa Birke, Nicole Gaddy, Lisa Birke

AGR

Engaging.
Contemporary.
Art.

SELF-GUIDED TOUR Natures of Reality

Lisa Birke

October 6 - November 30, 2021



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Lisa Birke, digital image, 2021

Meaning of Life



What sorts of things mean the most to you?

Many of the community members who made animations in collaboration with Lisa Birke talked about what they value and gives their lives meaning. As you listen to the stories on the TV monitors and augmented reality images, what sorts of things do you notice they mention?

Do they mention family, ancestors' struggles, pets, friends, inner strength, creativity and plans for the future?

Do any of the participants mention money or accumulation of material goods? Do any of them mention projecting a flawless image on social media?

Do you find meaning in any of these things?

(Un)Reality

Does a photograph or a video portray reality? What about a photograph or a video that's been digitally altered, is it more or less real?

You've probably heard of computer-generated effects, augmented reality, digital sculptures, and motion capture, and you might think that these technologies are used to fake moving images, for example, in big-budget Hollywood movies. But, Birke's installation reveals that every costume donned, every action performed, every word spoken and every image captured is in some way constructed to tell a story.

We are familiar with how these stories can give unrealistic impressions of perfection, for example, photo filters on Instagram and Snapchat or only sharing the best moments on Facebook. Birke invites you to experience many different ways technology can frame, tell and share stories and create meaning in our lives.

Big = Important?

Are the biggest and glitziest messages the ones most important to discovering meaning in our lives?

Lisa Birke has created a character who is blonde and glamorous and represents privilege. This character prances across a succession of scenes, out-of-place in her inexhaustible wardrobe of slinky gowns.

What is this spokesmodel advertising something on the comically oversized signs that wobble unsteadily as she holds them aloft?

"Live large," "go with the flow," and "survival of the fittest" are more than just meaningless platitudes regularly posted on social media platforms like Instagram. These phrases suggest that satisfaction comes from putting your own needs first, creating a glamorous image and accumulating all the things we desire. Is this truly gratifying or hollow satisfaction?



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