

ABSTRACT:

ART, MEDICINE AND TECHNOLOGY ALL HAPPEN IN THE SAME TYPE OF SPACE: THE WHITE ROOM: A STERILIZED ENVIRONMENT.

THIS IS NOT A COINCIDENCE

The Exhibition deals with the concepts of PURITY: Physical, Spiritual, Technological, Ideological, Artistic and its antithesis: CONTAGION: as idea, as meme, as virus -- forces linking and transmitting one thing to another.

PURE embraces the aesthetic of STERILITY: 1) the Operating Theater, 2) the Clean Room in high tech manufacturing and 3) the White Box Gallery.

1) Surgeons undergo a highly meticulous purification ritual. Upon entering the operating room, protective masks are donned. These barriers prevent contagion from infecting the patient, but also protect the surgeon from potential contagion from the patient.

2) PURE embraces the aesthetics of technology as well as technology itself in its quest to employ the most elegant (pure) solutions to technical problems. Technology is increasingly incorporating itself into the medical arena, so much so that it is becoming difficult to tell where the human and the technological elements begin and end, concepts which both delight and frighten us. It is the same situation with technology's influence on art.

3) PURE questions the relevance of Art's placement in the constructed sterility of the white box gallery. Art becomes the patient, subject for dissection and intense scrutiny. But, like the patient, Art is also the vehicle of contagion. It is the idea or inspiration, which the viewer takes out of the gallery, and transmits to others.

PURE deals with the intersection of art, technology and medicine beginning at the common environment where these disciplines exist: the sterile white room. The show explores the concept of Purity and Sterility, and how societal ideals have been both enhanced and compromised by our almost cult-like belief and dependence on Progress and the increasing interconnectedness within art, technology and medicine. That our PURE environment is a Big Empty White Box Store injects the volatility of The Market into the mix, forcing us to ask; Is Art being sterilized?

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PURE is a mixed media interactive exhibition / laboratory-- a collaborative effort of artists and performers exploring the concepts of Sterility and Contagion. Media includes installation, drawing, painting, sculpture, sound, song, poetry, photography, video, electronics, and performance with many improvisational and collaborative crossovers.

PURE is a loaded word. At once its varied connotations are positive and negative in the extreme. Consider spiritual purity. Consider racial purity. Consider a pure (clean) environment. A lake. A laboratory. A hospital-- a place of both healing and contagion.

Upon entering the PURE exhibition, viewers must go through a purification ritual- much as a surgeon does before entering the operating room. The viewer becomes the physician exploring, discovering, diagnosing the different symbiotic elements that make up PURE.

Unlike other white box art spaces the walls of PURE remain bare. The art huddles in the middle, a wide swath of empty space separating the pieces from the walls. Though the scale of the space is large, many of the works are small. Even when full, PURE is empty- minimal, forcing the viewer to come in closer-to examine and study the works more closely.

PURE questions whether art can be seen in a "pure" context. Within this "sterile" environment, art is mixed with artifact without adequate attribution. Artworks infect each other, seeking to challenge the rigid borders- the comfortable distance that physically separates individual pieces in most galleries or museums. The result is that in the process of assembling an exhibition of 73 artists, a group installation has been created from individual works and from intentionally or unintentionally placed random objects. This collaborative process between the artists is the backbone of PURE.

PURE ART is White, Black, Metallic or Clear by design. Whether this "Purified" and desaturated aesthetic embodies minimalistic sterility or constructed contagion becomes the question.

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PURE's location in Boston is very apropos with the announcement of plans to develop a number of high profile institutions dedicated to medical and scientific research. The exciting pace of scientific and medical discovery continues to revolutionize our lives. The artists in the exhibition explore how such advances have both enhanced and challenged our society and how we define ourselves within it.

The artists working in this collaborative effort are local, national and international. They are career artists, doctors, scientists, writers and technologists, a number of which are from Boston's academic community. They are seasoned professionals, famous names, unknowns, art students, collectives, professors, and first time artists. Non traditional artistic media such as academic research, are presented as lectures as well as physical objects, incorporated into the physical collage of the collaboration.

PURE is pleased to host an exhibition-within-an-exhibition of relics from the Empire S.N.A.F.U. Restoration Project.

-Lisa Lunskey Gordon, Curator Fall, 2006