

DELIBERATE DISTRACTION: SHAWN SMITH AND RUSTY SCRUBY

The common misconception that art and science are so vastly different, that they never overlap, is discredited by two contemporary artists, Rusty Scruby and Shawn Smith, whose work proves that the union of these two disciplines, like the brain's neuropathways between our right (artistic) and left (analytical) hemispheres, is the sweet spot known as creativity.



Rusty Scruby, Building A Nest, 2017, Hand Painted Acrylic On Poplar Wood Construction (Detail), Courtesy Of The Artist.



Shawn Smith, Stotting Thomson's Gazelle, 2014, 50 X 51 X 11 In, Bass Wood, Balsa, Ink, Acrylic Paint, Courtesy Of The Artist.



Rusty Scruby, Oculus, 2011, 20 X 20 X 6 In., Playing Card Reconstruction, Courtesy Of The Artist And Cris Worley Fine Arts.



Glitched Griffon Vulture, 2015, 38 X 67.5 X 17 In., Plywood, Ink, Acrylic Paint, Courtesy Of The Artist.



Glitched Griffon Vulture (Side View), 2015, 38 X 67.5 X 17 In., Plywood, Ink, Acrylic Paint, Courtesy Of The Artist.



Glitched Griffon Vulture (Detail), 2015, 38 X 67.5 X 17 In., Plywood, Ink, Acrylic Paint, Courtesy Of The

Rusty Scruby's educational background in aerospace engineering, mathematics and music composition is the blueprint on which he builds his lyrical imagery. The mathematical precision of his work syncs seamlessly with underlying personal allusion. Wood, paper, photography, playing cards and paint are transformed into objects that are simultaneously precise and diffuse, real and unreal, as well as rhythmic and static. Pattern and repetition echo universal laws of science, physics and mathematics and Scruby's drive to "map" the universe through unseen yet pervasive mathematical relationships. By interweaving complexity theory (random vs. rigid) with music theory (harmony vs. discord) inspired by mathematical repetition, Scruby reveals the tension between the whole and the sum of its parts, between human experience and reality.

Scruby's innovative three-dimensional constructions are a fusion of his artistic and scientific ingenuity. A former student of both aerospace engineering and music composition, Scruby manifests these skills into his work, producing an intricate harmony of math and music. His work has been featured in publications such as the Dallas Morning News, NY Arts Magazine, New American Paintings, Paper City, and Modern Luxury Dallas.

Rusty Scruby

"I use various techniques to reconstruct the photographic material. Using ideas I've gathered over the years studying music composition, engineering and knitting, I create what I call 'visual frequencies'. I work with ideas of tension and relaxation by controlling the amount of repetition in the image as it travels across the undulating surface." Rusty Scruby

Shawn Smith

"My work investigates the slippery intersection between the digital world and reality. Specifically, I am interested in how we experience nature through technology. I grew up in a large city only experiencing the natural world through computers and television screens. With my work, I create three-dimensional sculptural representations of two-dimensional images of nature I find online. I build my objects pixel by pixel with hand-cut, hand-dyed strips of wood in an overtly laborious process in direct contrast to the slipperiness and speed of the digital world. Through this process of pixelation, details become distilled, distorted, or deleted. I am interested in how each pixel plays an important role in the identity of the object, the same way each cell plays a crucial role in the identity of an organism." Sean Smith
Shawn Smith's earliest interactions with nature were limited to the pixelated representations viewed on television and on his computer screen. Today, Smith examines the deceptive way we experience nature through the lens of technology by creating three-dimensional sculptures of two-dimensional images sourced from the internet. Each sculpture is constructed pixel-by-pixel with hand-cut, hand-dyed strips of wood in an overtly laborious process that is in direct contrast to the slipperiness and speed of the digital world. Through the process of pixelation, details become distilled, distorted, or deleted, bringing forth into the natural world a language previously only understood through interactions with the digital world. Smith's sculpture in this exhibition draws inspiration from nature and genuine concern for the planet, animals and fragile eco-systems we share. Smith's sculpture can be seen as a twenty-first century

extension of René Magritte's 1929 enigmatic painting, *The Treachery of Images (This is Not a Pipe)*: a warning that technology can imitate life but it is not reality.

Shawn Smith attended Arts Magnet High School and Brookhaven College before graduating from Washington University in St. Louis, MO with a BFA in Printmaking in 1995. In 2005 he earned a MFA in Sculpture from the California College of the Arts in San Francisco. He has received artist-in-residencies from the Kala Art Institute in Berkeley, CA and the Cite Internationale des Arts in Paris, France. In 1996, Smith was a recipient of the Clare Hart DeGolyer grant from the Dallas Museum of Art. Smith's work has been exhibited at Hå Gamle Prestegard, National Art and Culture Center of Norway, and throughout the United States including the Austin Museum of Art, Arthouse at the Jones Center (Austin), Galveston Art Center, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (San Francisco), Southern Exposure (San Francisco), Grand Rapids Art Museum, Oakland Arts Museum, Berkeley Art Center, Richmond Art Center,, Holter Museum of Art (Montana), Northwest Art Center (North Dakota), Lawndale Art Center (Houston), Guerilla Arts (Dallas), Wichita Falls Museum of Art (Texas), the Armory Art Center (Florida), Scion Installation Center (Los Angeles), the Grace Museum (Abilene, TX) and the McKinney Avenue Contemporary (Dallas), among others. In 2006, he was commissioned to create a monumental public sculpture in San Francisco, CA. His work is in the permanent collection at the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery in Washington DC, the National Museum of Wildlife Art in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and the Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas. Smith currently resides in Austin, Texas.