

CAMPUS SOUND ART PUSHES BOUNDARIES

Gallery visitors interact with innovative sound installation in the Center for Visual Arts

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It's not often in an art gallery that the curator tells students to make noise, but this is just what the Center for Visual Art's new installation requires. From now through October 30, students will be able to stop by and interact with Dr. Ted Apel's *Concomitant Variations*, a sound installation found in the Dykman Family Project Space.

An assistant clinical professor in the Gaming, Interactive Media and Mobile Technology program (GIMM), Apel's work uses various-sized glass tubes and feedback circuits powered by a small battery on each tube. The circuits delay sounds that come from the environmental observers, the ambient sounds of the space and the sounds from other tubes. The result is an installation that constantly evolves due to the variations of different influences.

Apel has a master's degree in electro-acoustic music and a doctorate in computer music. He said the abstract nature of sound is challenging, so this installation in particular is another iteration of Apel's project to get a deeper look into that nature.

"It doesn't connect to physical things in the real world, it's just this abstract sound. And that abstract sound can be difficult to relate to," Apel said. "So all my work is saying, well, this isn't just an abstract sound, it's a sound that connects to a very particular physical situation."

His goal is to connect the observer to what is making the sound with nothing else to interfere. Put simply, the observer sparks the audio exchange, and the installation resonates in response, with each chime at different frequencies.

"That's all about trying to connect it so everybody gets to see what's there, and there's nothing behind the curtain," Apel said. "It's hard when working with electronics, to not have something be hidden. Here, what I'm trying to say is, what you see is your sound, and there's nothing behind the stage."



Apel's work challenges the spectator's idea of what to expect in an art gallery.

Featuring art that experiments with mediums also expands the typical idea of an art gallery.

"It gives students a different, maybe better way to experience art. It's not like usual art, it acts on a different sense, making us experience the piece in a different way," said junior visual art major Zoe Mendez.

The Center for Visual Arts is equipped to continue featuring artists who push what art as a medium can be with the Dykman Family Project Space rigged for audio and visual exhibits.

"The Dykman Family Project Space is going to be for showing video, sound and



Mackenzie Hudson | *The Arbitrator*

experimental installation networks, and I was excited to have Ted Apel be our first artist," said Kirsten Furlong, gallery director for the Center for Visual Arts.

Apel is also excited to see that his students in the GIMM program are using their skills in a similar fashion, combining what they are learning technically with the direction that their creative mind takes them.

"I think all things to be mediums for art now. One thing that's great about the GIMM program is we are training people with technical skills, as well as creative skills," Apel said. "And in my brain, these two things are not different."

Apel's exhibit shows that art and technology can work in tandem, while also experimenting with peoples' traditional ideas of art. It also causes the viewer to interact with sound through a method that may be foreign to them, showing sound in an abstract, yet physical way.

Boise State is working with artists who use left-field mediums and, with the Stein World Museum and other exhibits to look forward to, the Center for Visual Arts is an important new addition to the Boise State Campus for students to benefit from.