



"Four exhibits at Columbus College of Art & Design challenge expectations of visitors"

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Melissa Starker

Donald Moffett: 'The Radiant Future' and 'Mr. Gay in the U.S.A.'

An original member of the outspoken AIDS awareness activist group ACT UP, Moffett suggests that paintings shouldn't just passively hang on a wall taking up flat geometric space.

His most recent works break up the visual plane with curving, cleanly sawed holes and move away from the walls by way of a variety of apparatus. Lot 0808711 ("The Radiant Future") hangs from wire on a wooden post, while a more elaborate configuration of stone donkeys and a concrete girder is used in Lot 010212.

The paintings also extend outward with a texture that recalls shag carpeting, which is created through an extrusion process at which Moffett arrived after training as a cake decorator. The surfaces work like an intoxicant that dissolves the invisible barrier between fine art and viewers, unleashing an urge to reach out and touch.

A separate space is devoted to "Mr. Gay in the U.S.A.," Moffett's urgent and instinctive experiment with the typically representational practice of courtroom drawing.

The 17 works on paper accurately convey the horror in the trial of Ronald Gay, who opened fire at a Virginia gay bar in 2000 because he resented having his last name associated with homosexuality.