

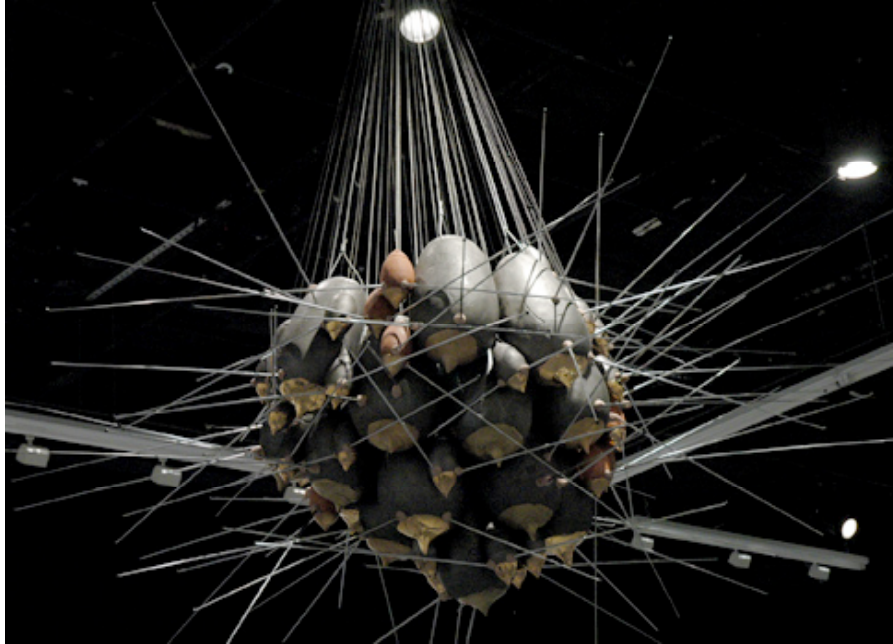


June 26, 2008

THE FUTURE AS A POINT OF DEPARTURE

In an ordinary mode of thinking, the Future always figures as a conclusion. Constantly a step ahead of us, we can never actually live it. The Future never comes – or only as the fleeting Present. For that matter, it does not exist. The best we can do is to formulate it analytically, mounting our speculations on the current and prior experiences. Or on our imagination, which is also an extrapolative framework with our informed anticipations grounded in factual here and now and back then. But there is also an extraordinary way of thinking – an artistic mode, if you permit. Here the future is not a conclusion, but a basic premise. This may not strike practical minds as a helluva correct *épistémè* (excuse my English!), but it is surely poetic.

The Future as Disruption is a group exhibition at the Kitchen, one of New York City's oldest non-profit art spaces. It features experimental works by nine multicultural artists who find inspiration and derive their creative methods – as well as their critical stances – from the Future (poetically speaking). The genre of science fiction provides these artists with a vantage point for looking at and criticizing contemporary society. The genre in all its various manifestations takes the artists beyond the paradigm of current technologies and established life-styles; and equips them with a new optics that renders a unique reflective perspective on the Present defined by today's pressing issues such as consumerist culture, environment, and war. The Future as Disruption is a disruption of the Here-and-Now construct. From the point of the poetically premised Future, the Present as we know it does not quite follow. What follows in this logic is a different conclusion – also a poetic one, as you may imagine.. and darker than any realistic account.



Simone Leigh, *Queen Bee*, 2008. Terracotta, TV antennae, gold luster, graphite, and epoxy. This fantastic combo of primitive ethnographic material and high-industrial stuff – high-tech medical equipment and TV antennas – hints on something important related to race and gender.



Greater Area Protocol Map. Olalekan B. Jeyifous and Matty Vaz (a social scientist) look with horror at the not so far-fetched possibility of ultimate commodification of social, political, and cultural values.



Another possibility – and not especially festive – as explicated by means of an air compressor by Julieta Aranda: *A Machine of Perpetual Possibility*. This perfect machine (here I am zooming on to the inside of the installation comprised of a plexiglass box filled with sawdust that responds to periodic air blows) looks particularly menacing against its background imagery on the wall – a series of prints entitled *There has been a Miscalculation*.



A fragment of William Villalongo's *The Reckless Eyeballers*, 2008. Let me guess, it's all about total and incessant visual control. Mind you, those omnipresent eyeballs on canvas glow in the dark – to metaphorically refer to omnipresent eyeballs that are

not on canvas. “See something? Say something!” – a sign in the NYC subway soliciting watchfulness on the part of citizens.



Simone Leigh, Brooch, 2005. And it's what it is: A giant brooch of terracotta bosoms surrounded by porcelain bananas... You've got the drift.