

Artcite exhibit encourages hunt for buried treasure

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Scott Hocking (Detroit, MI) and Clinton Snider (Hamtramck, MI) have assembled a treasure chest. In their show entitled, *Relics and Other Works*, on display at Windsor's Artcite Gallery, these two Michigan natives use their massive collaborative sculpture to focus "on the interplay between man and nature within the city of Detroit (that famously decaying, once great American city)."

Referring to themselves as "urban archeologists," Hocking and Snider have collected abject items with the hope that they may portray these cultural artifacts as "metaphors for [the] naturally occurring life cycles (creation, decay and rebirth)" found in Detroit and elsewhere.

The last tally revealed over four hundred wooden 'boxes' to be apart of the "reliquary walls that" make up "this installation." Each lone box measures exactly 18" X 18" on the face and 12" in depth. Together these individual artistic works make up a wall of objects that register with varying intensity and are meant to draw you away from the concept as a whole and question the details found in each unique container.

Like the concept of change itself, the boxes are "left open to the elements and human contact" and as Hocking expresses "naturally, they may change through travel and exposure. Some have been sold, others have been destroyed and/or recycled, and new boxes continue to be created. The installation is reconfigured and updated according to location and

theme."

Relics will evolve as an art piece. With time it will be reborn, age, change and ultimately decay. The objects will crumble leaving Hocking and Snider to begin again. The relics within the wall in this sense take on a human quality. This changing aspect forces viewers to consider several questions, among them, "what is art," and more appropriately, "When is art?"

According to the minds behind the ensemble, the sheer size of the exhibit is meant to overload the viewer with input that is representative of the artists' own experiences while exploring the foreign sites used in the collection of objects. The piece or collection of pieces is also meant to represent the state of Detroit, where the artists both live and work. It is

intended to showcase how Detroit is moving and changing through time.

From a personal perspective, the collection of boxes reminded me of several intriguing things. The first and most powerfully, being exploring in my grandparent's basement.

From the time I was little until now, nothing has brought me more joy than rummaging around my grandparents basement, in their attics and through the collection of things that are fresh and alive for me and forgotten about by them. The *Relics and Other Works* exhibit brought me the same joys. There is something hidden, intentional and not, in every square. I took quite some time to look for the smallest details.

Not only were the relics visually powerful but also the wide-

ranging levels of decay infiltrated my nostrils with a smell that can only be achieved though years and years of usage. Each object has pulled in the smell of its surroundings-the smell of water, weather, fire; it is all there, sealed in like a secret.



Photo Courtesy: <http://www.artcite.ca>

One of the many 18" X 18" boxes in the *Relics* exhibition, this piece creates a work of art from found automobile parts.