Jan Dean
inside outside - attraction repulsion

Paul V. Galvin Library
November 9 - January 20, 2007
opening reception
Thursday, November 16, 4:30 - 7:30 pm

exhibition hours:
Monday - Thursday: 12 noon - 6 pm
Friday: 12 noon - 5 pm
Saturday: 8:30 am - 5 pm
Sunday: 2 - 6 pm

Paradox. The vessel is a metaphor of our human existence, the body symbolized as a box or bowl is the vessel for the soul. The paradox between the need to belong and the need for individuality; attraction and repulsion; the inside and the outside; material expansion and contraction.

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Paul V. Galvin Library
Illinois Institute of Technology
35 West 33rd Street, Chicago, IL 60616

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Paradox. The vessel is a metaphor of our human existence, the body symbolized as a box or bowl is the vessel for the soul. The paradox between the need to belong and the need for individuality can be seen as attraction and repulsion; the inside and the outside; material expansion and contraction.

The vessel has long been a metaphor of our human existence. The body symbolized as box or bowl is the vessel for the soul. Living in western culture in the late 20th century demands the individual address and deal with issues of material existence. We use modern materiality to defend our personal space, regarded as precius, and we use it to reach out and interact with the world.

Dean includes a series of ceramic pieces with a seemingly incompatible set of the materials.

She writes:

This body of work tries to document paradox.

Art made of modern materials embodies the concept that materials bear identity. It is my choice to use materials of mass production to represent the modern identity. I use them to illustrate the paradox between the need to belong and the need for individuality. Each object, as an entity, illustrates a paradox between attraction and repulsion.

We choose between order and chaos or some degree between the two to order our lives. Either path ultimately ends in the same weightlessness of death. The technique used to bring the forces of shrinkage and expansion together also illustrate paradox. The ceramic materials will shrink in the vitrification process while the metals will expand during it. Both materials are selected for the range of temperatures they can tolerate. Careful assemblage is demanded to avoid mutual destruction of both elements in the firing process. The source of each piece is an investigation into understanding how opposites can require each other for coexistence. Whether you find yourself inside or outside of each piece is up to you.

Dean earned a MFA from the Cranbrook Academy of Art and has exhibited widely in the Midwest. Her professional experience as instructor, consultant and curator has included: South Suburban College, Richard J Daley College, The Notebaert Nature Museum, Lill Street Ceramic Studios, Urban Gateways, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago at Gallery 37, and The Museum of Contemporary Art.

The studio of Jan Dean can be reached at: www.jandean.com, thesculptor@jandean.com or 773-334-3355.