

Related Events:

All events are free unless noted otherwise and open to the public.

Artist's reception:

Sunday March 20, 3-5 pm

Fun for All

Sunday, April 9, 1-4 pm

Spark your family's creativity with free drop-in art activities you can take home. Conrad Freiburg will lead short workshops with his Self Contained Unit of Entropy (SCUE) machine inviting participants will make, document and destroy their own sculptures.

The Empty Set: A night of music

Friday, April 29, 7-9 pm

Donation suggested

Visiting and local musicians offer their renditions of the void in music. Live performances by Jason Ajemian, Bill Mackay, Mississippi Gabe Carter, Steve Lacy, Andy Hall, Frank Van Duerm, and others.

Harmony in Three Parts

Saturday, May 7, 2-3:30 pm

An AXIS Chicago program in partnership with the Graham School, University of Chicago \$15 for AXIS and HPAC members; \$20 for general public

Explore the facets of harmony with artist Conrad Freiburg, physicist Heinrich Jaeger, and musicologist Larry Zbikowski through Freiburg's current exhibition *It Is What It Isn't*. This multi-disciplinary discussion and demonstration will allow three scholars to examine how different types of knowledge inform our thinking and how each of these ways of thinking converge and diverge on the subject of harmony, movement, and language.

Drink, Draw, and Destroy

Friday, May 13, 7-11 pm

Make it and break it during an evening of fun at the Art Center. Special guest Conrad Freiburg will be bringing his SCUE machine out to play. Let the DJ inspire your drawing session and enjoy drink specials while you dance and gallery hop.

Artist Talk with Conrad Freiburg

Sunday, June 5, 3 pm

Got questions about *It Is What It Isn't*? Conrad Freiburg will discuss his work, process of art making, and answer questions from the public about his latest project.

Hyde Park **ARTCENTER**

5020 South Cornell Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60615 773.324.5520 www.hydeparkart.org

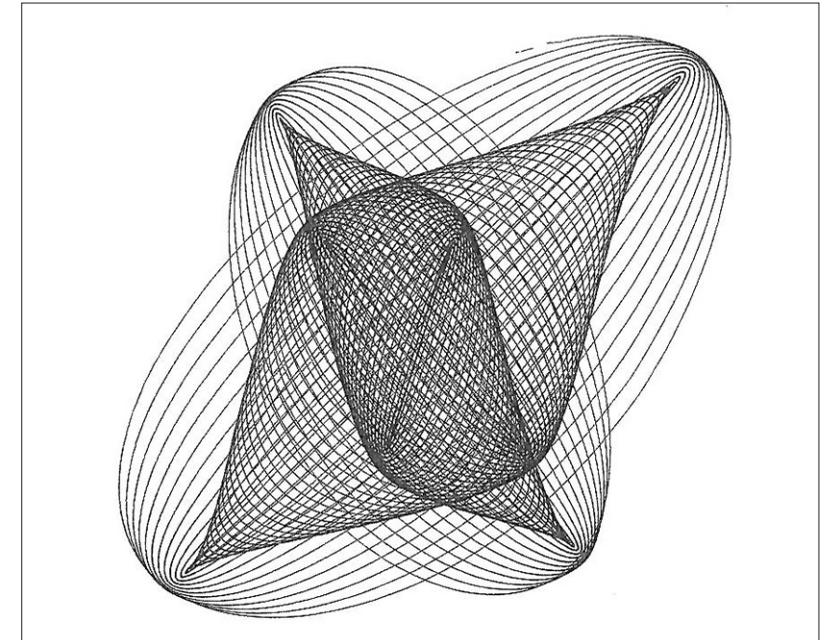
The Hyde Park Art Center is a not-for-profit organization that presents innovative exhibitions, primarily work by Chicago-area artists, and educational programs in the visual arts for children and adults of diverse backgrounds. The Center is funded in part by 3Arts, Alphawood Foundation; a City Arts III grant from the City of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and the Illinois Arts Council; Harper Court Arts Council; The Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; The Leo S. Guthman Fund; The Irving Harris Foundation; Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; JPMorgan Chase Foundation; The Mayer & Morris Kaplan Family Foundation; The MacArthur Foundation; The MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince; The Orbit Fund; Polk Bros. Foundation; The Clinton Family Fund; The Wallace Foundation; and the generosity of its members and friends.

Hyde Park **ARTCENTER**

Gallery 1

March 20 - June 26, 2011

Conrad Freiburg: *It Is What It Isn't*



Harmonograph #40
2010
ink on paper
8 1/2 x 5 1/2 inches

What does Nothing look and sound like? For the past three years, Chicago-based artist Conrad Freiburg has been consumed with the idea that the most powerful force in the physical world, as well as the psychological, emotional, aesthetic and spiritual worlds, is that which is not known or not understood, i.e., The Void. Determined to make art based on the self-issued orders to “learn from the unknown”, the artist built things and destroyed things in an attempt to get closer to understanding the void and honoring absence. Freiburg presents his in depth investigations into the Void through music and the visual arts in his most recent body of work presented in *It Is What It Isn't* at the Hyde Park Art Center.

A skilled artist, carpenter, ukulele player, and an avid lover of all music, Freiburg grounds his representation of the void in a 19th century machine called a harmonograph, which is used to give a visual form to musical chords and mathematic equations. This sculpture is an impressive machine with two pendulums that swing in different directions and control the lateral movement of a pen and a third pendulum that controls the drawing surface. Changing the pendulum height changes the harmonic interval, creating a unique geometric pattern that corresponds to a musical interval. The 12 foot tall kinetic wooden sculpture featured in the middle of the gallery is the largest harmonograph Freiburg has ever constructed and it provides the conceptual and visual focus for the exhibition. Freiburg’s harmonograph will be “played” by him and create drawings every Sunday afternoon throughout the exhibition. The songs it draws will be taken from a pool of memorial music offered “In loving Memory” by the public during the exhibition period.

The surrounding sculptures, drawings, paintings, and ephemera in the exhibition are installed in a very particular order matching the conceptual schematic the artist followed faithfully in his ongoing pursuit. Freiburg devised a system that breaks down the notion of the Void into the categories using the seven note major scale we are all familiar with (do re mi fa so la ti). Each note then represents a section of the artist’s pursuit of the unknown: do = the harmonic, re = the cosmic, mi = the philosophical, mi = nature and science, so = the carpenter’s void or labor, la = obsurances, ti = the Self Contained Unit of Entropy (more on this later) . The following chart of Freiburg’s geometric symbolism can be used as a quick guideline for the work and a helpful legend for mapping the symbols and language that appear throughout the exhibition.

Category of the Void	How is it experienced?	Relation to the Body	Number	Shape
Absence	Musical Harmony (do, re, mi, fa, so, la, ti)	Reproductive Organ	7	Heptagon
Loss	Types of love (self, lover, family, friend, absent)	Heart	5	Pentagon
Unknown	Philosophical manners (active, passive, absent)	Mind	3	Triangle

For example, the *Chimes of Pythagoras* are tuned to the seven notes in harmonic structure - Do, Re, Mi, Fa, So, La, and Ti - beginning from the south end (Do) to the north end (Ti) of the galley. These handmade instruments are the only musical notes audible in the installation and rely on the public to pull the wire and sound the chime. The halo of 108 drawings in the gallery charts the incremental movement of the bob or cement weight up the pendulum. Each drawing is the visual representation of a musical interval and the sharp drawings indicate a consonant node. The cosmic presence of the drawings is accentuated by the handmade telescope located on the Jackman Goldwasser Catwalk Gallery. The only way to view the small drawings close up is through using the handmade telescope provided for public use.

One of the most puzzling and engaging artworks in the exhibition is the Self Contained Unit of Entropy (SCUE), which is temporal and incorporates Freiburg’s signature element of self-destruction. Freiburg has made several sculptures over the years that are designed to be destroyed by the public. The SCUE machine is a sculpture designed for participants to create, document, and destroy their own sculptures made out of parts of Freiburg’s destroyed sculptures. At certain events (listed on the back of this brochure) Freiburg will lead workshops at the Art Center in which the public is asked to make that they will then get to destroy with the SCUE. A photographic archive of destruction will be available online during and after the exhibition’s run.

The Void is a central concept to many disciplines and can be looked at through multiple angles. In astronomy the void is represented in the vast emptiness of outer space. Religious beliefs, such as Buddhism, experience the void as a mental space for absolute consciousness. Psychologists liken the void to the relationship one has to the Other. The concept of the void is always defined through its opposite condition - the Something and Nothing define each other. In the artist’s words, “*It Is What It Isn't* explores the impossible VOID, the sublime unknown, the space into which we expand, the concrete absence we honor through song, carved stone memorials, night-time gazing at the vast emptiness of our heavenly rotunda, and the hand we can no longer hold.”

About the Artist:

Originally from Quincy in downstate Illinois, Conrad Freiburg asserts that Nothing is in his bones. As a result, he is able to focus his artwork on the moment of constant discovery open to many different disciplines such as music, martial arts, philosophy, astronomy, and engineering. His sculptures, drawings and installations often include the viewer to be physically interactive to complete the artistic experiment inherent to the work. Demolition and reconstruction are at the forefront of Freiburg’s investigations. His work has mostly been exhibited throughout Chicago since 1998. He received a BFA from the School of the Art Institute. He currently lives and works in Chicago, busks all over the country, and is represented by Linda Warren Gallery.

Conrad Freiburg is an Artist-in-Residence from October 2010 until July 2011 at the Hyde Park Art Center. He holds regular open studio hours throughout the exhibition on Sunday afternoons from 1-4 pm. Visitors are welcome to his studio located on the 2nd floor of the Art Center, Studio 6 during the run of the exhibition *It Is What It Isn't*.