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Buoys and boats

"Motivational Baggage" and "Brian Willmont" at the BCA, "Urban Networks" at Art Interactive

By: RANDI HOPKINS

6/7/2006 12:05:27 PM

Ships have served as vehicles for visionaries from Noah to Ahab to the *Poseidon* adventurers, and we love their symbolism, from leaky boats to pirate ships, and from the *African Queen* to the *Love Boat*. Two multi-talented, multimedia artists use this icon as a jumping-off point for their multi-dimensional exploration of human drive and purpose in "MOTIVATIONAL BAGGAGE: CALEB NEELON AND ANDREW SCHOULTZ," which opens at the Boston Center for the Arts' Mills Gallery on June 16 with a reception that evening from 6 to 8 pm.



Caleb Neelon, Pushmepullyou

The Cambridge-based Neelon and the San Francisco-based Schoultz both have their roots in street art: Neelon has worked on walls in Kathmandu, Reykjavik, Bermuda, Calcutta, and São Paulo; Schoultz's murals have graced settings from Portland, Maine, to Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Their gallery-wide installation for "Motivational Baggage" features an enormous sculpture of a boat spreading out across the floor of the Mills Gallery that's jam-packed with booty and sailing toward a too-small port. Sounds like poetry (though not quite in motion), and given the great way with imagery and materials that these two have displayed in the past (notably Neelon's impressive installation at the New Art Center in Newton last March and April), viewers may well be swept away.

At the same time, in the Mills's Project Space, "BRIAN WILLMONT: NEW WORK" features paintings and drawings by a Mass College of Art student with a penchant for juxtaposed architectural spaces and forms... a bit of dry land here, but with a definite twist. Still may want that Dramamine.

Social encounters in urban places can range from the barely personal (incidental, accidental bumping of shopping bags, a murmured "sorry") to the annoyingly personal but inscrutable (unavoidable overhearing of other people's cellphone conversations). Central Square's Art Interactive examines these phenomena in depth, in each case taking its own environs as a testing ground, in "URBAN NETWORKS," which is curated by Susan Joyce and opens this Friday, June 9, with a reception that evening from 6 to 8 pm. Five artists or artist collectives participate in the show: Finishing School, a Southern California-based duo who present two projects from their "Public Interaction Objects" series; John (Craig) Freeman, an artist and associate professor of new media at Emerson College who has been developing his site-specific, virtual-reality environments for close to a decade; Urban Atmospheres, a Northern California-based research group whose project offers your cellphone the opportunity to interface with locations in addition to other people; URBANtells, three media artists who will secrete micro AM transmitters throughout Central Square; and Jody Zellen, an LA-based artist who has her own way with the global phenomenon of public cellphone conversations.

"MOTIVATIONAL BAGGAGE: CALEB NEELON AND ANDREW SCHOULTZ" and "BRIAN WILLMONT — NEW WORK" | June 16-July 30 | Boston Center for the Arts' Mills Gallery, 539 Tremont St, Boston | 617.426.8835 | "URBAN NETWORKS" | June 9-August 6 | Art Interactive, 130 Bishop Allen Drive, Cambridge | 617.498.0100

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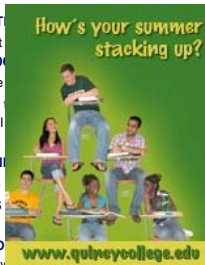
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- FINE CHINA: Boston Printmakers' 'Echoes of China,' Somerville and Medford artists at Tufts, 'Egyptian Myths and Magic' in Fitchburg
- YOU'RE HISTORY: "Ahistorical Occasion" at MASS MoCA, Members Exhibition at PRC, and "Asian Legacy" in Arlington
- SEE ME, FEEL ME: 'Please Touch' at GASP, NESAD prize winners, and the PRC Mother's Day benefit
- PRIVATE IDAHO: Laura McPhee at the MFA, Ann Carlson at Radcliffe, and 'Art House' in JP
- TALENT SHOWS: The 2006 DeCordova Annual, plus 'Art, Theatre, and Engineering' at MIT
- MASSIVE ATTACK: Wurm and Walker at the Rose, American photography at the Addison, Malpede and Fletcher at MIT
- BLINDED BY THE LIGHT: Painting Summer in New England at PEM, Pia Lindman at MIT, Julie Mehretu at Harvard
- TO THE LIGHTHOUSE: American watercolors, toothpicks and roadtrips, and 'Mixing Speak' at the New Art Center

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- GIVE IT SOME GAS: Zero Station + political action
- PERCEPTION QUARTET: "Four Indias" at the Newport Art Museum
- STARTIN' SOMETHIN': Bakery Collective

Boston Center for the Arts: <http://www.bcaonline.org/>
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develops anew

- **NOT JUST KIDS' STUFF:** Celebrating a classic children's book at the RISD Museum
- **RAISED WORDS:** Preserved posters are up at the Maine Historical Society
- **SELECTIVE STRIFE:** "In Our Time" at the PMA
- **A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY:** Is the Empire defining the current avant-garde?

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