

about the artist

Hills Snyder explores history and myth through installations that playfully combine arcane and pop cultural references. Snyder's propensity for punning, coupled with his interest in means of making sense (and nonsense), infuse his work with insights that transcend everyday ironies to touch on universal themes.

Evoking associations that are as often literary, philosophical, or religious as they are political or art historical, Snyder's projects expose hidden meanings in familiar images. Intrigued by the post-9/11 proliferation of patriotic symbols, Snyder spliced the striped portions of three US flags to create *Ridge and Furrow* (2003), whose title is an etymological play on the word delirium (from the Latin *delirare*, literally, "to go off the furrow"). His earlier *Back to Basics* (2001), a red, yellow, and blue acrylic guillotine, injects menacing undertones into modernism's palette of primary colors. Sometimes cryptic but always good-humored, Snyder's works generate narratives that ricochet off one another like reflections in a hall of mirrors.

Born in Lubbock, TX, in 1950, Hills Snyder currently resides in Helotes. Solo shows include *Fresh Up Club*, Austin, TX (2004); *Angstrom Gallery*, Dallas, TX (2001); and *Casino Luxembourg*, Forum d'art contemporain, Luxembourg City, Luxembourg (1998). Group shows include *McKinney Avenue Contemporary*, Dallas, TX (2004); *Pearl*, London, England (2001); and *Lombard-Fried Fine Arts*, New York, NY (2000).

about the project

Snyder's art often requires intellectual investment and sometimes compels psychological surrender. In *Book of the Dead*, visitors must check their preconceptions at the gallery door to uncover multiple layers of meaning concealed within spaces, objects, images, and texts. With its easy chairs and ominous instruments of execution, among other things, this installation envelops viewers in an uncanny experience of terror, wonder, and bliss.

Upon entering a darkened space through an elliptical portal, visitors are invited to lie back, relax, and bask beneath the sublime glow of a video lunette. Through the next passage, another, more sinister seat awaits; eerie black lighting floods the chair from above and below, while text commanding visitors to "stay" presents a double bind close to the hearts of many Texans. Before emerging from the darkness into the lights, sounds, and comforts of the ordinary, participants must chart their own paths through a nebulous space akin to limbo.

Rather than merely altering an existing environment, in this project Snyder constructs experience. Themes of life, death, hope, longing, rebirth, and redemption interweave with the artist's recurring emphasis on participants' positions of moral, social, and personal responsibility. With *Book of the Dead*, Snyder invites visitors to consider art, like life and eventually death, as a multifaceted, labyrinthine journey with surprises tucked around every turn.

-Vanessa Davidson
Graduate Curatorial Intern

events

Exhibition Dates

July 7 – September 11, 2005

Artists' Dialogue & Opening Reception

Thursday, July 7, 2005

Preview begins 6:00 PM; Dialogue 6:30-7:30 PM; Reception 7:30-8:30 PM

Featuring Jorge Macchi, Hills Snyder, Anton Vidokle, and Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, Curator of Latin American Art, Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Texas

Brown Bag Lunch

Wednesday, August 17, 12:00-1:00 PM

Join Assistant Curator Kate Green for a tour of *New Works 05.2* followed by a brown bag lunch (provided by Sip) and group discussion. Call Artpace for menu and reservations.

Event Locations

All events are free and held at Artpace. Free parking at Flores Street and Savings.

about Artpace

Artpace San Antonio serves as an advocate for contemporary art and as a catalyst for the creation of significant art projects. We seek to nurture emerging and established artists and to provide opportunities for inspiration, experimentation, and education. Our programs support the evolution of new ideas in contemporary art and cultivate diverse audiences while providing a forum for ongoing dialogue.

For more information, please contact Libby D. Tilley, External Affairs Director, at 210 212 4900 x122.

Artpace is open to the public Wednesday thru Sunday, 12-5 PM, Thursday 12-8 PM and by appointment. There is no charge for admission.