

Exhibition: New Connections (Durban University of Technology Staff Show)

REVIEWS OF : *Marquette for "Mapping a dyslexic heart"* -

In a peregrination between process, material and ideas, one of the strongest works on exhibition is Greg Streak's *Marquette for "Mapping a dyslexic heart"*. Masterfully evocative, this conceptual rendering of emotional dysfunction a result of 'the inability to place oneself – both physically and emotionally' is conveyed as a corrugated lead plateau pitted by undulations, pins and attached embroidery cotton. Here material deployed reminds of the tenacity of the ordering impulse of the mind (pins, thread, undulations) despite the overwhelming weight of a dysfunctional (dyslexic) reality (lead). Originating in, while at the same imploding notions of assumed and perhaps even desirable order, Streak simultaneously de- and reconstructs a sense of cohesion and direction associated with lived experience, instead plotting a terrain marked by chaos, disconnectedness, the unpredictable and the illogical.

- Juliette Leeb-du Toit (Prof)

Streak's 'Mapping a dyslexic heart' is a metal construction of undulating form, suspended at waist-height from the ceiling on thin stainless steel cables. The upper surface of a lead platform is interlaced with a network of cotton threads attached to a series of pins which pierce the form; the pins emerge and are visible from the underside of the platform.

The work alludes both to the human figure (skin, membrane, internal organs) and landforms (undulating hills and valleys). He states that the pins and threads are metaphors for connections like the synapsial nodes which regulate impulses of the brain. The artist sees this sculpture as a work-in-progress, a study for a piece on a larger scale; the metal folds and furrows of his sculptural form evoke the hills and valleys around Durban, mapped and entangled with enigmatic connections of roads and telephone cables.

The physical heaviness of Streak's use of lead as his main material in this work reinforces his conceptual strengths: a deep sense of anxiety at the disorders of contemporary life; a disquiet at what he says as 'humankind's need, and at times failure, to control the chaos of everyday life'.

- Ian Calder

"There is something surreal too about Greg Streak's sculptural piece opposite. Our mind tells us that the lead which is its main ingredient is the heaviest of materials, yet our eyes see something akin to crumpled paper studded with dressmaking pins which hold a mesh of delicate threads, floating in space."

- Andrew Verster