

String Theory

Michael Markwick, Visual Artist

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New Installations work by Tania Bedriřana & Michael Markwick

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Michael Marwick(left) and Tania Bedriřana(right)

String Theory is a theory in physics that is tied to a more commonly known Theory of Everything. Through physics, research is being done to search for a theory that unites all things in our existence. Interestingly, in this exhibit, there is little science, but we do grasp a unified theory behind the work of the Dutch American artist Michael Markwick, and the work Peruvian artist Tania Bedriřana. If there is a String Theory or Theory of Everything, in these installations and paintings it lies in fear, anxiety, loss of identity, the alien, foreigner, and perhaps violence and vulnerability. It might also be looked at as a darker view of the present: our theory of everything, or all that seems to string us together, is our destruction of our communities.

In this drawing installation Michael Markwick chooses a graphic line in which he plays with the notion of a drawing „string“ or „line.“ Here, somewhat abstract but iconic forms flow through the space: bleeding organs, cities, and planets fall from the sky, reality literally is turned upside down. A skull peers out from underneath a form, while a noose hangs ready in open question. The work culminates into a ceiling of growing cloud-like, and body-like forms, the bones cleaned from digestion; the viewer may notice the remains about to be dropped on them. Cosmic and yet grounded heaven and hell are merged and difficult to separate. In contrast to the graphic drawing in the front space, the back room offers a series of paintings on transparent vellum. These paintings are light, fluid, and yet iconic, conjuring feelings of bombs, clouds, tents, and horizon lines. His theory is open and growing; we are asked to formulate our own conclusions. Yet death waits around nearly every corner in this work. The words, „playful eschatology“ come to mind.

Tania Bedriřana's work contrasts the work of Markwick by shifting to delicate painting and collage techniques. The hanging works are physically tied with various strings, suspended from the ceiling and interconnected with subtle drawn lines. Each figure painted has its own character, holding onto masks, losing them, or wearing them to take on new identity. Strings of narrative also take form in the installation and interestingly we see that a sort of game is played, both by the Peruvian artist in her placement, but also perhaps in the process of creation, in which found objects are used in their making. She has strung together painting and found objects to create a powerful vision of vulnerability and terror.

Her figures grow when the viewer goes around the corner - naked and closer to life size. The viewer is now on level with the characters, witness to their reality. Tania uses the room's damage in her drawings, integrating them into her story - holes serve as open wounds, rescue is far from possible. The figures assume power and are determined to overcome a landscape where wolves are running wild.