

COFA 3: Diane Victor



TITLE Firestarter - solo exhibition

MEDIUM- Burned decommissioned currency of specific value, ash on paper

EXHIBITED : Fried Contemporary . Pretoria, August – September 2016
Public talk on production process and demonstration .

Annotation:

The body of work for this show was developed around a project I was exploring using specific values of burned and pulverised decommissioned currency. Money is often perceived as a life preserver, that which stands between us and the “wolf at the door” and much of our energy is directed towards its attainment. Yet once this desirable commodity is decommissioned and shredded its paper currency loses all value. My interest was in the re-appropriating of this waste material, giving it a second life through the process of burning. Reduced to its basic form of ash the ex - money could become re-valued through the process of drawing. I produced a series of small drawings of life preservers [flotation devices used to keep one from drowning] in each case the value of the purchase price of the flotation device was used to dictate the amount of ash I would use for the drawing. Hence a pair of water wings costing less had far less ash to draw with than had a small raft. The value of the purchase dictated the amount of currency converted to ash for the drawing. My interest in the re-valuing of redundant materials, through the process of burning is in the transformation that occurs in the viewer’s perception of the material, how values artificially constructed are a shared illusion brought into and directed by cultural norms. The range of life preservers varied from a playful inflatable flamingo intended for swimming pools to the high-end, multi-person life raft designed for open sea survival.



The public demonstration was held at Fried Contemporary gallery and the entire process of burning and grinding the shredded currency and then using it to draw was demonstrated in full. The public engaged in questions about the process and

perceived values of money and art and my intention was to attempt to open thoughts about value and monetary worth in relation to artistic value and ascribed quality. Financial value assigned to an artwork in relation to its aesthetic, ideological and material value. How skilled expertise might be measured in relation to monetary value. Art acquired as investment [financial flotation devices] held in hopes that in times of future financial instabilities it might be used to hedge against crumbling currencies.

The exhibition included a number of other drawings all making reference to figures floating or drifting in water, dependent on the buoyancy of the life preservers to maintain their existence.

