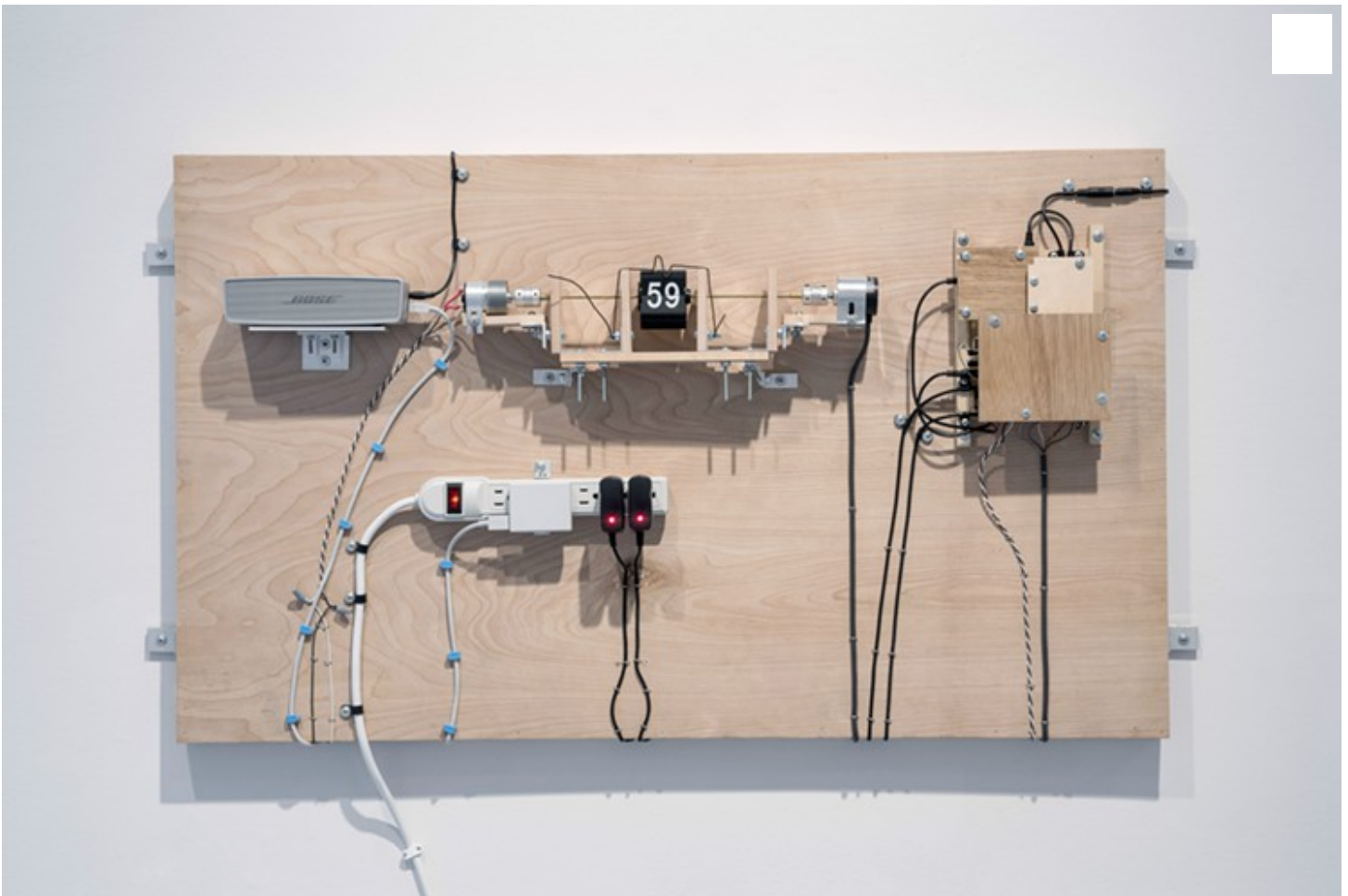


Flipping, Cranking, Whirring and Turning: New Sculptures Turn Clocks Inside Out

BY SUSIE TOMMANEY

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2016 AT 7 A.M.



Sculpture by Jeff Shore | Jon Fisher from "Clockworks" exhibit at McClain Gallery.

Photo courtesy of McClain Gallery

Gone are the days when Jeff Shore had to tinker with abandoned household electronics to cobble together his next kinetic sculpture. Named Best Artist in [2003's Best of Houston®](#), the Texas-based sculptor now has the luxury of purchasing off-the-shelf parts to create his artistic mechanisms.

He began partnering with sound designer Jon Fisher in 2002 and the pair have together produced a strong body of work, merging their respective talents into rotating, projecting, sound-making watchamacallits.

The duo's new "**Clockworks**" exhibit in the west gallery space at McClain Gallery doesn't have all the whiz-bang-boom of this year's site-specific "Drip Machine" at Blaffer Art Museum. That Rube Goldberg device converted four aquariums into a 20-channel soundscape using water pumps, valves, sensors, electronics and lots of plastic tubing. It looked as if it had been lifted out of Victor Frankenstein's laboratory, ready to concoct an elixir for some ghoulish experiment.

With their unfinished wood and the inner workings exposed, the six sculptures in "Clockworks" are both deceptively simple and brilliantly inventive, quick to elicit a "How did they do that?" response. At first glance they seem all the same: a wooden panel, the flipping numbers from the inside of a clock, a power strip, cables, power cords and wire. The flip-flip-flipping of the numbers slow down and accelerate in step with the music until, sharply, the six devices all stop simultaneously.

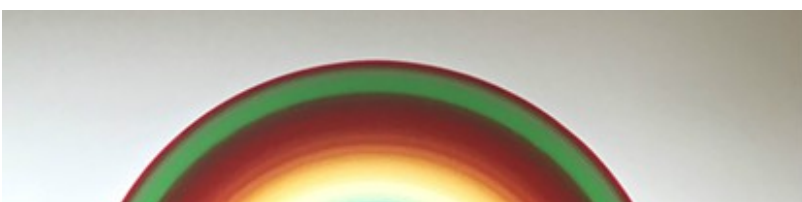


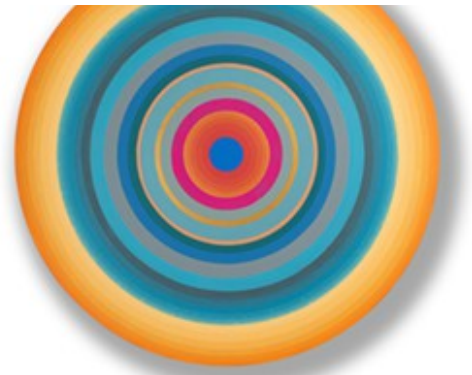
Installation view of sculptures by Jeff Shore | Jon Fisher from "Clockworks" exhibit at McClain Gallery.

Photo courtesy of McClain Gallery

After the silence, the viewer notices a small red button on the wall. Is it a trick? Will the music start back up on its own? Are we supposed to push the button? No, no and yes. The sculptures work together in synchronicity, playing a variable program of nine musical compositions. Sound guru Fisher talks about encoders, motor speed controllers and the rotation of an axle to produce the sounds, but there's far more to that story.

The differences within each sculpture begin to amplify. Shore has artfully arranged the braided wires, Phillips-head screws, electrical caps and power cords in varying patterns – faintly reminiscent of a printed circuit board – placing the mechanical aspects of the machines in full view instead of hidden behind a chassis.





(L) *REDRISINGONE*, 84 inches, and (R) *REDRISING SIX*, 41 inches, by Gary Lang, from the 'WANDERWONDER' exhibit at McClain Gallery.

Photos courtesy of McClain Gallery

In the main gallery are nine new paintings by Southern California-based artist Gary Lang. There's an energy to the over-sized concentric circles in "WANDERWONDER," and they remind the viewer of giant vinyl records, but tricked out with saturated Pop Art colors. Ranging in size from 41 inches to 84 inches in diameter, Lang brushes his circles meditatively, moving from dark to light and back again. The technique offers up an optical illusion effect, making some of the paintings appear convex (the 84-inch *REDRISINGONE*) or concave (the 60-inch *REDRISINGFOUR*). Bordered by a bright sunshine-yellow, the 41-inch *REDRISING SIX*, with its variable-width bands, seems to glow against the white walls of the gallery space. These are not machined: proximity reveals the stops and starts to his brush, imbuing the humanity of the painter onto the canvas.

"Clockworks" and "WANDERWONDER" continue through December 22, at McClain Gallery, 2242 Richmond, open Tuesdays through Fridays 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Saturdays 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., 713-520-9988, mcclaingallery.com. Free.