

GEOMETRY *UNBOUND*



“I think the universe is pure geometry - basically, a beautiful shape twisting around and dancing over space-time.” –Garrett Lisi



THE AMERICAN CENTER FOR PHYSICS
One Physics Ellipse
College Park, Maryland 20740

DIRECTIONS

To reach ACP from the Capital Beltway: Take Exit #23- MD 201 southbound (Kenilworth Ave.); follow MD 201 for about 3 miles; turn right onto River Road at light; follow signs on River Road to ACP and Physics Ellipse; will see building on left.

To reach ACP from D.C.: Follow Rhode Island Avenue northbound; turn right onto MD 410 (East-West Highway); turn left onto MD 201 (Kenilworth Ave.); turn left onto River Road at 2nd light; follow signs on River Road to ACP and Physics Ellipse; will see building on left.

Metro: College Park - U. of Md stop on the Green Line.



GEOMETRY *UNBOUND*

ADAM DAVIES

SHERRY G. SELEVAN

VICTOR R. WEIDNER

SARAH TANGUY, CURATOR

Reception 6 November 2017

5:30 - 7:30 pm

Gallery Talk 6:15pm

The American Center for Physics

One Physics Ellipse

College Park, MD 20740

23 October 2017–21 April 2018

For viewing information,

call 301.209.3000



Above top: Sherry G. Selevan, *Reflections Times 2*, 2010, glass and chromed cylinder, 4.5 x 10 x 8"; courtesy of the artist.

Above: Victor R. Weidner, *3D Vase*, 2000, oil on canvas, 24 x 18"; courtesy of the artist.

Cover: Adam Davies, *Allegheny Square, Pittsburgh, PA*, 2017, archival pigment print, 48 x 38.5"; courtesy of the artist.

GEOMETRY *UNBOUND* highlights the many intriguing possibilities that geometry offers to artists Adam Davies, Sherry G. Selevan, and Victor R. Weidner as they map out spatial relations in their work, whether their images are abstractions of the imagination or representations of the visible world. Integral to their exploration is the study of perspective and how differing approaches affect not only the formal rigor of their compositions but also the optical and emotional reception of the viewer.

In his color photographs, Adam Davies chronicles the overlooked and the abandoned of the American landscape, stops on a solitary road trip where the viewer engages directly with urban and rural scenes haunted by the patina of time. Juxtaposing architecture and nature, these “psychological portraits of places,” envelop in their visual complexity as they tease out myriad details and dynamic configurations. At once memory carriers and harbingers of things to come, the images play on inherent tensions between order and chaos, decay and renewal, to reveal layers of lost



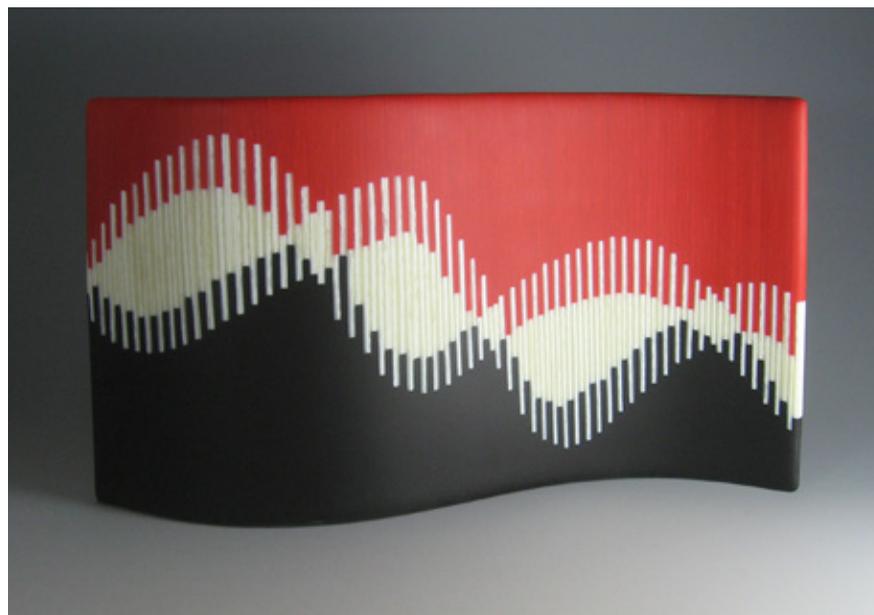
Adam Davies, *Humpback Bridge, Covington, VA*, 2016, archival pigment print, 38.5 x 48”; courtesy of the artist.

historic data on a single plane. And though absent of figures, evidence of human activity is clearly present and lends poignancy to his subjects’ utilitarian elegance and forlorn beauty.

Davies uses an 8 x 10-inch, large format camera, which allows independent motion of the lens and perspectival shifts. After drum scanning and color adjusting the negatives, he prints them at a large scale to optimize the resolution and subtlety of the film. In *Allegheny Square, Pittsburgh, PA*, a cropped view of a weathered, glass-paneled facade creates a dynamic pairing between the vertical/horizontal grid and other parts of the building with the pastel reflections of clouds and buildings. By contrast, the arching diagonal of the rural covered bridge in *Humpback Bridge, Covington, VA* frames the entire left edge, crosses over Dunlap Creek (its surface silky smooth because of a long exposure), and meets a misty grove of barren trees with flanking banks of grass and snow.

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Davies uses an 8 x



Sherry G. Selevan, *Double Helix*, 2012, glass, 8 x 15 x 2”; courtesy of the artist.

After a career in Environmental Health and Epidemiology, Sherry G. Selevan turned to glass as a creative outlet: “I look at glass’ duality: an amazing mysterious material that responds to gravity and variations of heat,” discovering fused glass in 2006. In her current practice, she begins by cutting, arranging and fusing small pieces of glass in a kiln where temperatures can reach 1500 degrees Fahrenheit. The fused pieces are then “cold-worked” (sawed, sanded, sandblasted, or drilled) and returned to the kiln multiple times to achieve the final finish and shape. As she continues to probe the medium’s behavior, she considers herself a collaborator with the kiln, their shared endeavor balancing decision-making and control with an element of surprise.

Selevan’s sources of inspiration vary from architecture and nature to science and travel. In the satin-gloss *Double Helix*, thin strips of laminated red, French vanilla and black intersecting along the center echo the work’s serpentine shape and evoke DNA coils or Navajo textiles. The waveform recurs in *A Ripple in Time*, a study in reflections where ethereal figures, some self-portraits, hover in an indeterminate field, and *Conjoined*, which features two sheets of turquoise glass hinged by copper wire, one opaque, and the other translucent and crackled. The Renaissance technique of mirror anamorphosis informs *Reflections Times 2*: the photograph of a dock is distorted and sandblasted onto an enameled glass disk, while the undistorted image appears when reflected on a chromed cylinder, and reveals itself only when the proper viewpoint is assumed.

Trained as a physicist, Victor R. Weidner taught himself painting in the 1960s during his tenure at the National Bureau of Standards (now NIST) where he concentrated in spectrophotometry, devising technologies to measure reflectance and spectral properties in materials ranging from plants to carbon dioxide frost and polytetrafluoroethylene powder. Initially drawn to nature as a subject, he became fascinated by the many patterns underlying objective reality as well as those stemming from mathematical equations and scientific principles. His present body of work is both a window on the world and a surface to hold illusion.

Weidner’s early work, *Methuselah Tree*, features a fanciful mountain scape with jutting diagonals of craggy outcrops and fractal-like branches of a lone tree and nearby bushes. Some twenty years later, *Burnside Bridge*, a panorama based on the three photos taken from the lower left foreground, evidences the index of refraction (a dimensionless number that gauges the bending of light as it passes from one medium to another) in the darkening bands of blue from the sky’s reflections on the river. In *3D Vase*, a dazzling still life from the same period, Weidner combines the purely abstract patterns of an hourglass vase and receding shelf with a bouquet of flowers. Equally eye-popping are his *Concept* paintings. In *Supernova*, for example, the illusion of an expanding wavy cone, achieved through shading, counters the flat, interior pinwheel and zodiac disks ringing its border.



Victor R. Weidner, *Supernova*, 2002, oil on canvas, 24 x 20”; courtesy of the artist.

Like the Titan Prometheus, who in Greek mythology gave fire to humanity, the artists in *GEOMETRY UNBOUND* shed new light on how to compress the fundamental tenets of geometry onto a finite surface. In exacting compositions that balance alternate versions of reality, representation slips into abstraction, and as simplicities turn into nuances, their works unveil visual enigmas of lasting impact.