

JTT  
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**Elaine Cameron-Weir**

September 8 - October 27, 2019

*strings that show the wind*

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What seems at first glance to be a kind of stamped tin ceiling underfoot, reveals itself as something else. Elaine Cameron-Weir reorients the gallery with a modular steel subflooring, typically installed to corral cables in offices, data centers, and libraries. This reflective tech platform is inhabited by three pairs of sculptural works. Each pair has an imperfect symmetry, revealed much like an ammonite would be when spliced in half to show the workings of its inner chambered structure. These cut symmetries could be put back together to form a whole, if only mentally. Or perhaps opened and closed like a book.

On this now-floor,

*'it thought you were someone else  
it thought you were me  
bounded by strings  
in the distorted phases  
of a topological superfluid  
a mysterious density  
half-speed vortices and long walls'*

and

*'at the end of the line  
an echo sliding downtown  
the mercurial reflective  
pool of a familiar voice  
and me a person it never made real  
in the mirrors of my own halls'*

are a pair of stainless steel trolleys once used to transport chemical barrels, now carrying twin drapes of rubber-backed concrete cloth. They spiral upward as in a wringing vortex, with a bright serpentine outline created at their edge by neon tubes. Mobile yet substantiated by weight, the hollow centers formed by the fabric are set with cast glass lenses once intended for a homemade telescope, handmade by the artist's father. Tucked behind, polished concrete hemispheres hold a tetrad of liquid candles. Wheels, lenses, and half-globes, permit the potentialities of each of these elements to tilt, rotate, and spin. The technological shifts suggested in this neon/candle dichotomy do not propose a compromise, however, but rather an acknowledgement of our desire in time-sensing, and of time-being. In outer space, we have been measuring distance with the speed of light.

*'but it knew her still somehow  
by the strings that show the wind  
impoverished things  
decorate these tunnels  
yet it dreams of wires always  
in a scatter radar memoir'*

and

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*'the face on the tip of my tongue  
its hum next to me underground  
the wind comes and is seen  
heralded by strings  
these devices of measure  
tracks and life activities  
in the fossil record  
symmetries to the physical world'*

are composed of eight pendent and connected sections of stainless steel chainmail that form two vertical scrolls, held in place by a pulley system and heavy pieces of polished fluorite on trolleys. Attached to each chainmail section is a pewter disc, casts of mass-produced centrifugal rubber molds, commonly used in the production of cheap metal jewelry and trinkets. As cast, rune charms, angels, flower chains are spun together all the same. They recall trace fossils, those permanent fleeting pigeon feet and dog paws in cement sidewalks, or oversized ex-votos. Grafting a presence and relationship between materials and objects, the mechanisms map out coordinates in space as an action and a specter for the potential multiple.

On the wall,

*'we all go to work by proxy  
but it dreams of wires  
and it was setting the sun  
it thought it had lost everything  
but then it found you instead  
and it woke up laughing'*

and

*'the witnesses turned away  
he signed the moon out of bed  
and fact folded back yielding  
a crumpled up smile  
a discarded face finally familiar  
it was setting the sun  
it was waiting for you'*

are two tri-fold structures configured by stainless steel laboratory hardware, on which similarly constructed chainmail scrolls with cast pewter discs hang in the middle panels. They are flanked by temporarily decommissioned objects, a glass chandelier arm on one side and a military whip antenna on the other. Rawhide panels are stretched to function as vertical lamp shades backed by neon squiggles and a single liquid candle. The stasis of repurposing or storage of these objects stages a pause, a resting point for the readability of past use.

Elaine Cameron-Weir's object-sculptures are practitioners of turning procedure into rituals, of courting customization as a commitment to openness. They fulfill and acknowledge the provisional limits of freedom. They rally behind the speed and slowness of time, of material histories. They harken back to the future and foretell the past. Divorced from function, they function again — the moment when the strings show the wind, and the wind shows the strings.

-Jo-ey Tang