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Adela Andea: "Rappel" at Cris Worley Fine Arts

by john zotos

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For Romanian-born sculptor Adela Andea, ambitious art exists and thrives in a place where art and technology intersect. For several years, her luminous constructions referenced light and space in works with titles like *Cryogenic Structure #4* and *Dwarf Star*, meant to hang on the wall, from the ceiling, or simply sit on the gallery floor. Andea uses an eclectic array of materials that would normally be in a lab or research facility, like cold cathode florescent lights, computer case fans, LEDs, magnifying foils, flex neon, and various wires and plastics. The work could be read as a contemporary natural consequence of the forward-thinking present in Laszlo Moholy-Nagy's Light Space Modulator, a 20th-century avant-garde hallmark.

In her newest installation of reflective light sculptures, titled "Rappel," Andea ponders the impact of her first visit to the Palace of Versailles during an artist residency in Bordeaux toward the end of 2015. Specifically, it was Hardouin-Mansart's *Hall of Fragmented Mirrors* that inspired this show, and the French word for reminder, *rappel*, supplies the title. The show suggests that despite the passage of time, and the chaos of contemporary life, we are inextricably connected to the historical past. Andea reconfigures the opulence and luxury of French Neoclassicism, and the ancien régime of the Sun King, into a technological expression far removed from the idea of an absolute monarch. In pieces like *Le Roi Soleil*, *Vive le Roi*, and *Petite Rouge*, illuminated yellow triangular shapes in styrene are bathed in red and yellow light, such that they seem to float above the source, in a constellation that glistens and twinkles. These luminescent wonders point toward the future in the same way as Hardouin-Mansart's radical designs paved the way to the ultimate downfall of the monarchy and the foundation of a

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republic.

Through her work, Andea does not merely hold up a mirror toward history. For example, one of Andea's sculptures features LEDs in the revolutionary tri-color, signifying events in the past and also our current and uncertain future with democracy under fire. In this particular body of work, Andea seems to contend that a retrieval of the past sets forth the conditions for an engagement with new and future possibilities as art and history unfold.

Image:

"Poudretteite," 2016, Adela Andea

Plexiglas, LED, 60" x 32" x 32"

Photo: Kevin Todora

Courtesy Cris Worley Fine Arts

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