

HUFFPOST ARTS

Mark Handforth: Rough Dark Diamond

-Eric Minh Swenson

I recently had the opportunity to interview gallery sales associate, Ben Parsons, for a film I did on the current exhibition at Kayne Griffin Corcoran in Los Angeles. My film features Miami artist, Mark Handforth's latest solo exhibition, Rough Dark Diamond.

The film is a guided tour by Parsons who details the materials, cultural signifiers, and allure behind the sculptures installed within the gallery and the courtyard. Parsons notes that Handforth manipulates form, material, context and size in the six sculptures presented in the exhibit.

Most striking is the installation of an array of blue lightbulbs on the back wall posing as a backdrop in a modern world of a mechanically dysfunctional star sculpture that seems harmless, yet broken. The constellation of lights alone proved to be a filmmaker's challenge in exposing for the bulbs' inner filament juxtaposed with the white walls of the exhibit space.

On the ground one will stumble upon a massive bronze telephone receiver in its raw state twisted in a non-threatening yellow bar as a symbol of the forgotten past, a past still clinging and not wanting to let go. In a world of smart phone technology, who really remembers the relics and symbols of old phone receivers and twisted clothes hangers that belong in dark closets, not as surreal sculptors twisted in a lush courtyard.

In a bit of satire, Handforth titles the twisted clothes hanger in KGC's courtyard, Alan Watts. Named after the Zen philosopher who taught about letting go, especially broken things and not clinging to objects, perhaps, Handforth's use of Watts' name is a message to let go and surrender before we become bent ourselves.

Handforth and KGC deliver a simple show, yet with a bit of awe and puzzlement. In this simple mix of dazzling lights, shiny surfaces, and rusted metal, one may come to terms with the show's title... Rough... Dark... Diamond.

