



CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT Los Angeles Times

“HOLE Relocation” features a mold of a Detroit hole.

ART REVIEW

‘Holes, Voids’ is filled by ambition

CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT
ART CRITIC

Can a hole be moved? Is a hole that’s brought from, say, Detroit to Los Angeles the same void or a different one when it gets here? Is the void already just everywhere, merely awaiting an identifying contour?

That and other philosophical conundrums are the heart of Richard Haley’s engaging if occasionally erratic show (his third) at Another Year in L.A. Some of the 22 Conceptual works could be tighter. But, mostly using winningly casual materials, “Holes, Voids and Other Descriptive Terms for Blankness” is an ambitious, frequently captivating meditation on serious subjects — decay, death, decomposition and emptiness.

Getting an object to signify nothingness isn’t easy. In one video with accompanying artifact, Haley rubs a tiny hole in a butterfly wing with an artificial wax finger until the gossamer material disintegrates. Another video that shows a shadow cast over a patch of wilting grass claims that lack of light is killing it — even though nearly invisible fishing line can be seen tugging the green blades downward. Conflicting forces of nature and culture aren’t always distinguishable.

The show’s centerpiece is

Richard Haley

What: Haley’s “Holes, Voids and Other Descriptive Terms for Blankness”

Where: Another Year in L.A., Pacific Design Center, B267, 8687 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood

When: Through Nov. 2, closed Sat.-Mon.

Info: (323) 223-4000 or www.anotheryearinla.com

that portable hole. Haley made a plaster mold of a small, unexplained hole in the ground in Detroit, where he lives, transported it to L.A. and used it to cast an identical hole from packed dirt. The component parts are displayed with a handcart that can move the void around, plus an explanatory drawing and a documentary photograph.

Perhaps the work’s most resonant feature, as with the show’s theme, is its ostensible point of origin. As voids go, Detroit fairly shouts with social, cultural and historic significance. Bringing an emblem of it to L.A., some might argue, is like carrying coals to Newcastle. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

christopher.knight@latimes.com

LA Times

October 3, 2012