

BOULEVARD QUARTERLY

BY ISSUE FIVE WITH BY CATEGORY

Laddie John Dill

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[Laddie John Dill](#) is a California-based artist who crafts intricate and often awe-inspiring works of art out of unexpected materials.

Here are his thoughts on whether utilizing different mediums modifies his artistic vision, why he enjoys working with interesting elements and how maintaining professional connections plays a part in his overall marketing strategy.



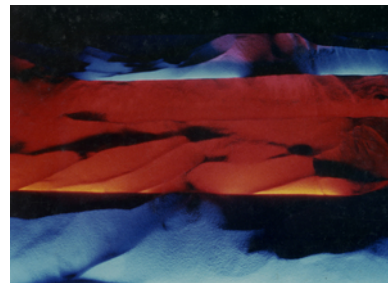
How would you describe your work to someone that has never seen it?

A sensory and (perhaps) emotional approach to materials otherwise thought to be out of the realm of art making.

Also, the use of ambient light and light that has contained radiance.

You seem to have a fascination of sorts with lighting/lights. Where or what does this fascination stem from?

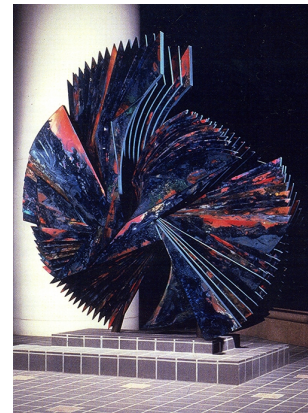
My stepfather was a mathematician and a lenses designer. He actually was one of the developers of night vision in the 60's and 70's. I grew up in a household that had laser beams running down the



hall splitting into five sections at a prism. I always wanted to be a painter, however I found early on that the depth of color and the employment of its ambient light was more possible using technology. I was then very interested in experimenting with light as paint.

In what ways does your artistic style change depending on what medium you are working on?

Again, I've always been attracted to materials that are used industrially or in theater. The mediums, actually, interact with each other and then take a more prominent place in the hierarchy in the materials that I want to use. I don't feel like I have a lineage or a line that stops abruptly and then gets into other materials or visual language. I consider my so-called "lineage" to be concentric rather than a straight chronological line. I've been known to recycle medium and even ideas back

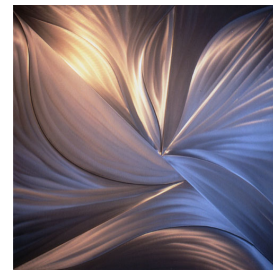


into recent work. In my younger days, I had the privilege of working with Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg at [Gemini GEL](#) in Los Angeles and was really astonished by the way they were able to take concepts from twenty years ago and reincorporate them into their recent work.

Obviously, that was a huge influence on me.

How does choosing to work with non-conventional materials (i.e. cement, glass & oxides) influence your work?

I'm drawn to the idea of using materials (i.e. glass and sand) that have their own individual connotations and can be interacting with one another in a piece. Also, on a more psychological level I tend to combine materials that are solid, stable (like glass) with materials that have more of ephemeral qualities (like sand).



You have been working in the art industry for several decades. How do you balance having a distinct, recognizable style with coming up with art that attracts the eye of a modern audience?

I think it's purely coincidental.

Tell us about your very first exhibition.

My first exhibition was at [Sonnabend Gallery](#) in New York.

It was in their uptown gallery on 74th and Madison. The show consisted of a sand, glass and light piece that was purchased 45 years later by the [Museum of Modern Art](#) in New York. It also contained one wall light piece purchased by Richard Bellamy. There was also a sand and neon piece on the floor. The show was very well-received and was followed by a number of museum exhibitions the next year.

The art industry is a surprisingly competitive one. What do you do to market yourself and your work?

I have relationships with what I consider the best galleries that can represent me. I currently show with [Ace Gallery](#) in Los Angeles. It's interesting that one would call it the art industry...a sad fact, especially because it used to be called The Art World.

How do you deal with criticism?

Badly.

Which past, present or planned exhibition of yours do you think is most important?

My first and my last.

All images included in this piece belong to [Laddie John Dill](#).
In [Art, Issue Two](#)