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Professional Studies II

January 28th, 2021

Review of Ellen Ferrier’s Work in *Tairseach/Threshold*

Ferrier’s work *Eleven Limbs* serves as the threshold to this aptly named multidisciplinary show. As one enters the gallery one is immediately drawn into the movable limbs of the work. Large scale and bodily, *Eleven Limbs* is reminiscent of Louise Bourgeois' spider sculptures in its size and form. It feels tenuous in its delicate suspension from the rafters of the gallery, as if it is clinging to life by the very twine that grants it animation.

As one passes through the work one is immediately confronted by *Haptic Relations*; a work that offers a refreshing return to tactile art in this pandemic era. Like *Eleven Limbs* it is composed of striped hazel sticks suspended on copper wire. Viewer participation is made possible by receptacles of sanitized “touch mediators'' at either end of the piece. It is playful, musical, and a pleasure to interact with, however, the work faces a few challenges in its presentation. *Haptic Relations* feels cramped within the gallery space. It is aesthetically appealing, yet not given room to breathe in a somewhat over crowded gallery. Additionally the laminated signs on the “receptacles for touch mediators'' are a jolting bit of plastic and typeface in a piece that otherwise embraces the handmade and naturalistic.

In a group show, *Epidermis*, a work composed of hazel bark and positioned between two paintings of Shannon Castor, creates a welcome dialogue amongst the work. The paintings and *Epidermis* both pull upon repetition of physically brutal processes causing the viewer to embrace cross-media dialog.