

Implicate and Explicate Order

Alex Pentek's work is both fluid and fixed, creased and linear, supple and structural, expanding the flat plane of drawing into sculptural volume. He transforms paper and steel rods into geometric configurations that enfold and frame space. The intricate furrows of his origami compositions swell and contract, revealing patterns of rigorous repetition as they suspend from, and swathe around, the rectangular structures that support them.

The title of the exhibition *Implicate and Explicate Order* refers to a concept by theoretical physicist David Bohm, who used it to describe a way of simultaneously understanding reality from two different aspects – the perceived (explicate) order of the world and a deeper (implicate) connection between elements. In the context of Pentek's work, the implicate and explicate take various forms. He invokes it directly in the diptych of *Implicate* and *Explicate*, where two folded works made from the same size sheet of white paper with the exact same crease pattern are skilfully manipulated to create very different shapes. A closed contour of a sphere and a more open hyperboloid form are suspended within identical dark metal lines, the paper constructions further connected by the repeating arrangements of detailed folds that mark their surfaces. The objects are human scale, and we are invited to look closely, to witness the elaborate system of composition that binds them into being.

In the large sculpture *Implicate and Explicate Order*, the shift between object and frame is more complex, as a vast Mobius band of paper curves around a towering scaffold that directs our gaze high into the gallery space. The viewer has to move around the work to fully appreciate the sinuous form and technical feat of the shape memory origami Miura folds, even as we are continually looking through the empty space that it delineates. Eye and body travel concurrently and we become part of the turning flow of openness and movement inherent in the piece.

If Pentek summons our mental and bodily motion into the work, he also subverts our expectations of the materials he employs. In its involved and serpentine movement, the single sheet paper seems the more dense matter, a substantial presence that balances and bends deliberately around the fine, angular poles of the metal structure. It is a paradox of measurement that recurs throughout Pentek's practice where lightness and weight, surface and shape, memory and experience recur and reform in multiple, connected structures.

In its formal abstraction and elegant synthesis of volume and void, *Implicate and Explicate Order* clearly calls back to the object based modernism of the 20th century avant-garde, and yet, the emphasis on process, performance and system based actions situate the work in the context of the conceptual practices of contemporary art. This embrace of embodied experience is also extended by the artist into a dialogue with the art form of dance through the folded forms Pentek was commissioned to create by choreographer Luke Murphy. These pieces lie dormant on the gallery floor until they are activated by dancers who quiver and pull, twist and wear, leap and lie with the

sculptural shapes, and as with the work in *Implicate and Explicate Order*, remind us of the ever changing possibilities of existence and the relational mysteries of the universe.

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