

Concept White Paper

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Patrick Lichty – 355 Seyburn Dr.
Baton Rouge, LA 70808
(225) 766-3811 voyd@voyd.com

Suburban Meditation

Mixed – Mode Environmental Installation

Project Description

The American Suburb is a place that has its own set of rituals, from the mall to the soccer field to the ubiquitous lawn. This installation plays with an observation by the artist that the drone of the lawnmower bears a striking resemblance to Tibetan Buddhist chants and that the practice of mowing itself lends to a similarity to the raking of gravel in Zen practice. The juxtaposition of such activities with ancient spiritual practices critiques the importance ascribed to banal tasks such as yard maintenance in turn of the millennium American materialist culture. In so doing, the artist suggests that lawn maintenance, as well as the placement of certain artifacts like chrome balls, plaster rabbits, etc., evokes an ironic analogue to these aforementioned spiritual practices

Gallery Installation:

Suburban Meditation has two main components: the lawn installation, and video reception gallery. In the museum's lawn, the artist will place a series of common lawn artifacts, such as chrome balls and plaster bunnies in the yard that will serve as pivotal points for the artist to mow the desired pattern around. Secondly, the mower will be fitted with an audiovisual television transmitter that will broadcast the mower's perspective and noise live into the gallery.



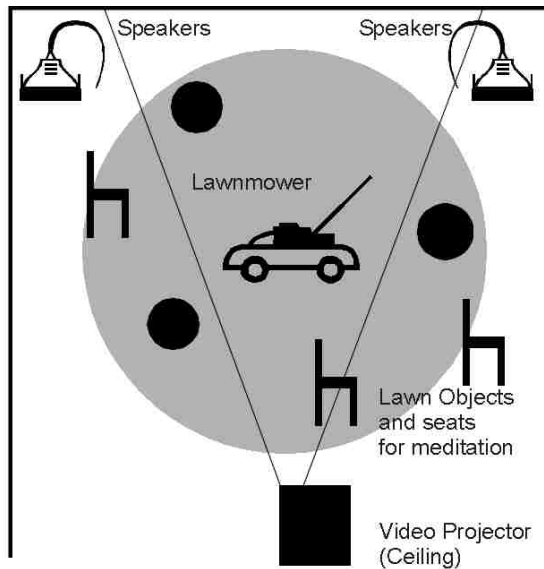
Within the gallery, the video will be projected in front of an installation of a mower on Astroturf, and the audio feed will be mixed with chants and other sounds such as those of prayer bowls. The event is repeated every day for a week, where the lawn will be inscribed with an ephemeral pattern, signifying the similarity to the Zen garden, and for each day, a certain time in the gallery will have been set aside for 'Suburban Meditation'.



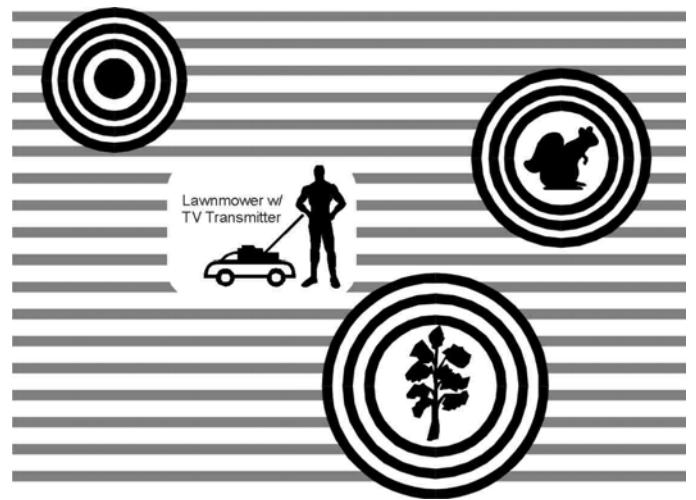
Specifications:

- (2) Push type lawnmowers (gasoline preferred)
- (1) CCD television camera with microphone (artist supplied)
- (1) Low power television transmitter/VCR with Rabbit Ear Antenna (Artist supplied)
- (1) Video Projector (Artist Supplied)
- (1) PA system w/mixer (for gallery)
- (1) CD player
- 10'x10' circle of Astroturf
- Various Lawn objects (jockeys, Bunnies, boulders, chrome balls)

Proposed Layout



Gallery



Outside Lawn

NOTES:

This was first installed at Barrister's Gallery in January, 2004.