Libby told you about "Art Full Text" in her post. I saw the show yesterday and have to say I loved it. It's one of the best City Hall outings yet so kudos to Curator Calvin Jones as well as to all the artists -- and there are a bunch -- 35! hunn, lydia

My favorite pieces in the show have a sculptural presence. It may be that sculpture is the way to go in the vitrines here which, as Libby says, make some things difficult to see.

Shiny paintings and small scale works are particularly hard because of the glare on the glass.

The first thing to note about this exhibit, which follows on the heels of the abolition of the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture is that instead of the free informational handouts about the show (a list of titles, a curator's statement, a greeting by the Mayor, artists' statements and the like -- extremely useful to hardworking reviewers) you now get the show's postcard announcement which includes a handy, mail-in coupon on the back soliciting donors to Art in City Hall. ($25, $50 and "Other" are the suggested amounts.)

Ah budgets. At least there's a show.

I particularly like the works that use found words, like Kent Latimer's "No Exit" (image left) made from found signage and "Victory" rat traps (I do hope those weren't found).

I've written about Latimer whose sculpture is sorely under-represented in shows around town. Here's a post after a studio visit I had with the artist.

John F. Hollis's "Love Proclaimed," has also got the found word karma going on. Hollis's wonderful color photograph of some graffiti declaring a boy's love for a girl written below a billboard labeled "Infinity" (image right, sorry it's blurry) shows the world at its most serendipitous and wry.

Speaking of serendipity, I was driving into town and popped a cd in that was a Janet Cardiff audio, "The Missing Voice: Case Study B" which was sent as promo material for the new Cardiff/Miller piece opening next month at Eastern State Penitentiary. The audio was one of the artist's walks, set in London, and, as usual, the story was paranoid and about a mysterious journey being retraced and the voice is all conspiratorial and the ambiance is lost! oh lost!

Then I parked the car and saw this exhibit and stopped dead in front of Kate Murken's yarny tale "A Journey Upwards and Downwards" with the words all conspiratorial and the ambiance all lost! oh lost! and I knew that Murken and Cardiff were riding a similar spooky wavelength making their art. (image is detail of Murken's lovely work)

wille, alison

(top image is exhibition case with Alison Wills'e's slumpy Marlboro Menthols sculpture, "A Pack a Day." Doesn't the soft pack look great in the hard case?)

yun, samuel

The second thing to note about the layout of the exhibit is that City Hall now has an airport-type security system in place in the north corridor on the 4th floor (where Council Chambers are). In order to access the art on the 4 you must put your stuff through the x-ray machine and walk through the metal detector gate. It's not really a big deal but I mention it as one of those things you don't normally have to do when going out to look at art. Art in City Hall brings art and the world into a collision it otherwise wouldn't have.

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(image left is more shovels in glass cases I found right around the corner from Hunn's piece. The bottom shovel -- which is actually a spade -- is dated Aug. 16, 1877 and the information says "spade was used by John Rice, esq, President of the Building Commission to break ground on the site of new city hall. The top shovel dates from Jan. 23, 1962.

(image right is with Lydia Hunn's "Many Things are Moved by Shovels," a piece Libby and I saw in a larger version at Highwire Gallery's Shovel Show -- and at Slought's emerging artist show if memory serves. A good piece travels well and it looks just fine here, too.)
hollis, john f.

murken, kate

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