

Adela Andea Brings the Music to Her Light Party in "Cocomirle"

By
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Houston artist Adela Andea's light installations and sculptures are true crowd pleasers, captivating artists at galleries, art fairs and, last winter, Art League Houston's outdoor garden-turned-bio-electronic environment, "Primordial Garden." The Romanian-born artist returns to the Montrose art space -- this time indoors -- for the site-specific installation "Cocomirle."

Andea's work has been described in the past by this paper as akin to an "Eastern European disco -- in a good way." As if taking that dynamic to its logical conclusion, in her latest light show, Andea brings music to the disco, too, thanks to a collaboration with experimental sound group CHIN XAOU TI WON.

In "Cocomirle," at least six electronic keyboards are suspended in the air of Art League's main gallery. They're joined by a web of lit rods, jumbled wires, energy-efficient light bulbs and flashing lights that give the room an '80s dance party vibe.

While the multiple instruments aren't being used in the installation's normal state, there is music, courtesy of four screens scattered about the space. It's difficult to watch the film, much of which is comprised of negative images -- that backwards, black-and-white quality -- but mostly it provides the soundtrack to the experience. At times it has an ambient melody, others more ominous, and, given all the

keyboards, is largely synth.

In the center of this disco party is a deliberate music station; keyboards, amps and chairs are set up as if for a performance. But given their lack of use, these pieces may as well be hanging from the ceiling, too. As if all dressed up with nowhere to go, this central aspect makes the installation seem like its empty or missing a key aspect. It's a little jarring, as if you came for a concert and nobody was there, but the instruments were still out and the lights left on.

There are opportunities to see the space used to its fullest potential, with performances planned for May 31 and June 21. They are surely not-to-be-missed components of this immersive, electronic environment.