

ROBERT LANSDEN AT CRIS WORLEY FINE ARTS THROUGH NOVEMBER 14

By Todd Camplin

Back when Biosphere 2 was a major headline in the news, one thing that stuck in my memory is that without the wind, the trees in this enclosed environment were weaker and suffered from etiolation. Take away one natural element and the system breaks down. Robert Lansden lives in the system he creates for each art piece. His works are drawings that seem to grow out like trees and his work looks so delicate that if you took one element away, it would possibly break apart. At the opening, I was surrounded by his drawings at Cris Worley Fine Arts and I felt simultaneously a calm and exuberant euphoria.



Robert Lansden. *To Hold You In My Mind #1*. 2015, watercolor on paper, 40 40" x 30"

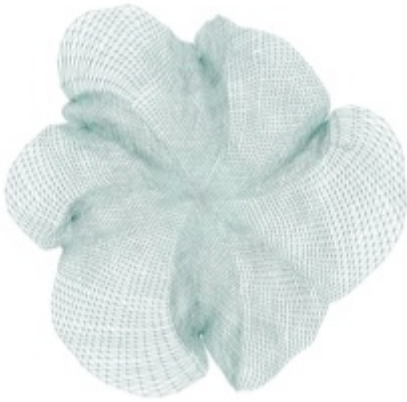
Lansden is what you might call a generative artist in that his work is created through his personal system of mark making. Some conceptual artists that are generative include: Francois Morellet, Sol Lewitt and Hans Haacke. Unlike these artists, which also have a minimalist agenda, Lansden seems to introduce a

more organic element that make the work feel more natural and connected to something less man made. Yet you might mistake his work for computer generated art, but these are hand done drawings. I watched him point out variations in his mark making, which was extremely slight for a human rendering. Although Lansden isn't really creating work that is about computers and what they can make, I think many people see similarities to his work and computer generated work which adds a bit more tension. I find following the waves and motions mesmerizing.



Robert Lansden. *Let it All Go By #1*. 2015, ink on paper, 40" x 30"

A sense of calm overcame me as well. Even the titles of his pieces seem to invoke a beautiful moment. Like the titles, *Light Through the Leaves* or *The Sound of Rain* capture a time and hold it in place as an idea to reflect upon and wonder about. Talking to Lansden, he said people have described his work as reminding them of sound waves. And he admits that he listens to music while creating his work, but like Lansden, I think there is a great deal more at play. His shapes and forms in this body of work flow and grow more like natural structures that are clearly affected by the environment around Lansden while he makes the work, but are also moved by his personal vision and goals. This pushing and pulling of his self and the environment plays out on the page. Lansden's system requires an internal dialogue with outside stimuli to fully come together into finished art pieces.



Robert Lansden. *Light Through the Leaves*. 2015, gouache on paper, 30" x 22"t

If you have followed my writings, you might know that I too draw delicate works in pen. When I was looking at the work and talking to Lansden, I knew I had met a kindred spirit. I felt even closer to him after learning he was originally from Earlington, Kentucky, which is a 20 minute drive from where I was raised in Kentucky. It's funny how a shared place can give feelings of connection. Lansden's path has lead him out of Kentucky to New York, Louisiana, and just in the past few days, Connecticut. He exhibits widely and his show titled *Metamorphosis* will be up at Cris Worley Fine Arts until November 14th.