



Ground Zero

Craig Kraft

October 23 - December 6

Opening Reception:

Friday, October 23, 7 - 9 pm

Neon Light Sculpture: Historical and Contemporary use of Light in Art:

Sunday, November 15, 7 pm

Kraft discusses neon's history, application, and fabrication.

Discussion and Closing Reception:

Sunday, December 6, 5 pm, *Graffiti vs.*

Neon: Discussion led by Kraft,

moderated by Dr. Claudia Rousseau

"After transforming my own random scribbles into neon drawings in the series "Unintentional Drawings" I noticed a photograph in (the NY times) of the Ground Zero Blues Club taken by Shane Lavelette for the High Museum in Atlanta. It was for an exhibition titled "Picturing the South", 2010.

The image of a corner of the club immediately resonated, reminding me of my own random graffiti. Yet it was different; it was done by strangers in a dark classic southern blues club. There were decades of mostly intentional, overlapping marks entirely covering the club. In February of 2013, I traveled to Clarksdale to see the graffiti, first hand. The visual impact was astonishing. The feeling was similar to when I discovered my unintentional drawings years before. I stayed for two days in Clarksdale collaborating with photographer Evy Mages taking 1,000's of images of the club walls, ceilings and furnishings. They were all taken in low light and hand held. I selected the most poignant images, knowing I was going to light them and had them printed on 3' x 2' Epson premium photo paper- enhanced matte. Painted and scratched neon tubing was then used to highlight, deconstruct and reinvent the original images." - Craig Kraft, 2015

"Graffiti, by its very nature, is a subversive act. Marks made without permission transform the environment in ways that are often controversial. Whether found in the urban landscape or at a single location like Ground Zero, graffiti is a subversive intervention into the cultural norm."

- Dr. Claudia Rousseau

Dr. Rousseau will moderate a discussion led by Kraft at the Closing Reception of *Ground Zero* at the DC Arts Center on Sunday, December 6 at 5 pm