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# SEEKING VISIONS FOR A BETTER WORLD: In Need Of Art

Kevin Frazier, Volunteer Photographer

If the name Hedreen rings any bells for you, you may recall a \$300 million art collection donation to Seattle University this March by Richard and Betty Hedreen. The current Hedreen Gallery's mission statement is broad, claiming to be a space to support emerging artists and exhibit work by established artists. Closing out the regular school year, "SEEKING VISIONS FOR A BETTER WORLD," a Participatory Art Installation with RYAN! Feddersen, plans to add art to the display throughout its allotted time, closing June 8.

Feddersen has many captivating installations that address Native American history, societal change, the human experience and a plethora of other topics. "AURA" (2019),



Kevin Frazier

An attendant holds a participation sheet.



SEEKING VISIONS FOR A BETTER WORLD, the centerpiece sign put together by Seattle university students viewed from outside the Hedreen Gallery.

in pop-culture, literature, and media. Inspired by traditional pictographs and contemporary graffiti culture, this collection of visions creates space for a dialogue where we can build on ideas, reflect on our culture and imagine better outcomes for humanity."

commissioned by the Artist Trust at Seattle Center, is a photo booth of the constellations and earth, separated by 27,000 pieces of trash created by the grinning visitors who pose for their photo in front of their collection. Check out "AURA" and Feddersen's other work on her website.

"SEEKING VISIONS FOR A BETTER WORLD" first appeared in the Alternator Centre for Contemporary Art in Kelowna, BC in 2019. For the current installation, the opportunity to submit art was initially distributed to a Seattle U art course. The installation is now accepting submissions from anyone, advertised on flyers posted around campus:

"'Seeking Visions for a Better World' is a call for images and aspirational sentiments that invoke constructive visions of the future to counterbalance the preponderance of dystopic visions presented

A vapid step away from the contemporary graffiti culture it claims inspiration from, "SEEKING VISIONS FOR A BETTER WORLD" currently resembles more of a trendy sticker book than a vision of an improved world. Inspiration is a very strong word to use when comparing the current state of the installation to the often rebellious and anti-establishment tone of contemporary graffiti. "You

are Loved and Free from Fear” emboldened in cursive and bubble text on the wall of a private Jesuit university building does not strike with the same vigor or defiance that arguably defines graffiti. And it doesn’t have to!



Artist RYAN! Feddersen and Arielle Simmons, Galleries Curator of Seattle University’s Hedreen and Vachon Galleries pose for a photo in front of the wall of art submitted by Seattle University students. (Kevin Frazier)



RYAN! Feddersen, lead of the participatory art installation, gives a speech to the attendants of the opening night of SEEKING VISIONS FOR A BETTER WORLD. (Kevin Frazier)

There is nothing wrong with kindness, but the lofty claims of the installation’s purpose contrasted with many hyper-positive doodles read for an audience tired of the inconveniences posed by a world in which exists acute pain that is not being addressed with avoidant silence and complacency.

There is a careful balance that must be held to add positivity in a world writhing with “dystopic visions of the future in pop-culture” without invalidating the feelings and events that cause such outlooks. Being a community submission-based installation, the varying directness and urgency in the presented art reflects the differing reactions and feelings elicited when a better future is proposed.

If you have the time and attention span to read *The Spectator*, you have the time to share your vision for the future. Participate in the change you’d like to see, submissions are open through May 25th. Visit Feddersen’s website or the Hedreen Gallery (Wednesday-Saturday, 1-6 pm) to contribute to “SEEKING VISIONS FOR A BETTER WORLD”.