

WHITE FLAG PROJECTS

Karthik Pandian

March 12 - April 23, 2011

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Karthik Pandian: Elements of Style

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4568 Manchester Avenue

Saint Louis, Missouri 63110

www.whiteflagprojects.org

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*Karthik Pandian:
Elements of Style*

This exhibition's primary element is a site-specific rammed earth and glass sculpture, "*Cahokia Byobu (Broken Screen)*," which drew on the artist's two-year investigation of the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site.

publication



Cahokia Byobu (Broken Screen), 2011

Mirror pane glass, rammed earth with cement, shells, mason's line, 16mm film strips, glass shards
Dimensions variable; as installed, rammed earth wall sections 24 x 96 x 6 inches each, mirror
pane glass sections 24 x 96 x .25 inches each, 294 x 96 x 36 inches overall

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What happens when history finds its gaze in the mirror? How does it regard itself? Its figure? Its look? Like the exhalation of a stale gas, this reflection bespeaks a spiritual emptiness that pervades *Elements of Style*. The third and final installment of a trilogy of exhibitions that draws on the artist's two-year investigation into the celestial, archaeological and architectural milieu of the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site in Collinsville, Illinois, *Elements of Style* presents an ensemble of new sculptural, sound, light and wall works that brings this body of work home to the locale Pandian's research began.

Using the rammed earth technique and repurposed mirror pane glass from his 2010 exhibition *Before the Sun* at Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis, Pandian has created a new large-scale sculpture that bisects the gallery diagonally into two triangular halves. Inspired by the persistence of the Japanese folding screen as an icon of chic, generalized spirituality, the sculpture, entitled *Cahokia Byōbu* (*Broken Screen*), embraces the functional and decorative possibilities of the form, while playing on the subject of landscape and pastiching the artist's own fascination with ancient and modern entanglements.

The two wall works, or *Shards*, included in the exhibition are remnants from the formwork used to create the rammed earth pillars featured in the artist's exhibition *Unearth* at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Exhibited here for the first time, the fragments bear the traces of the pillars' varied earthen surfaces and are incised with the grid that has come to symbolize the archaeological-architectural horizon dividing the trilogy.

For the initial evening of the exhibition, Pandian created a work in the tradition of the nightly *son et lumière* shows that animate architectural monuments from French châteaux to the Pyramids of Giza. A program of shifting colored light inspired by the lighting design of the Cahokia Mounds Interpretive Center is set to an ambient soundtrack based on field recordings from the apex of Monk's Mound during sunset. While the sound and light show represents a significant time-based feature of the project, *Elements of Style* is Pandian's first exhibition to emphasize sculpture without a moving image component.



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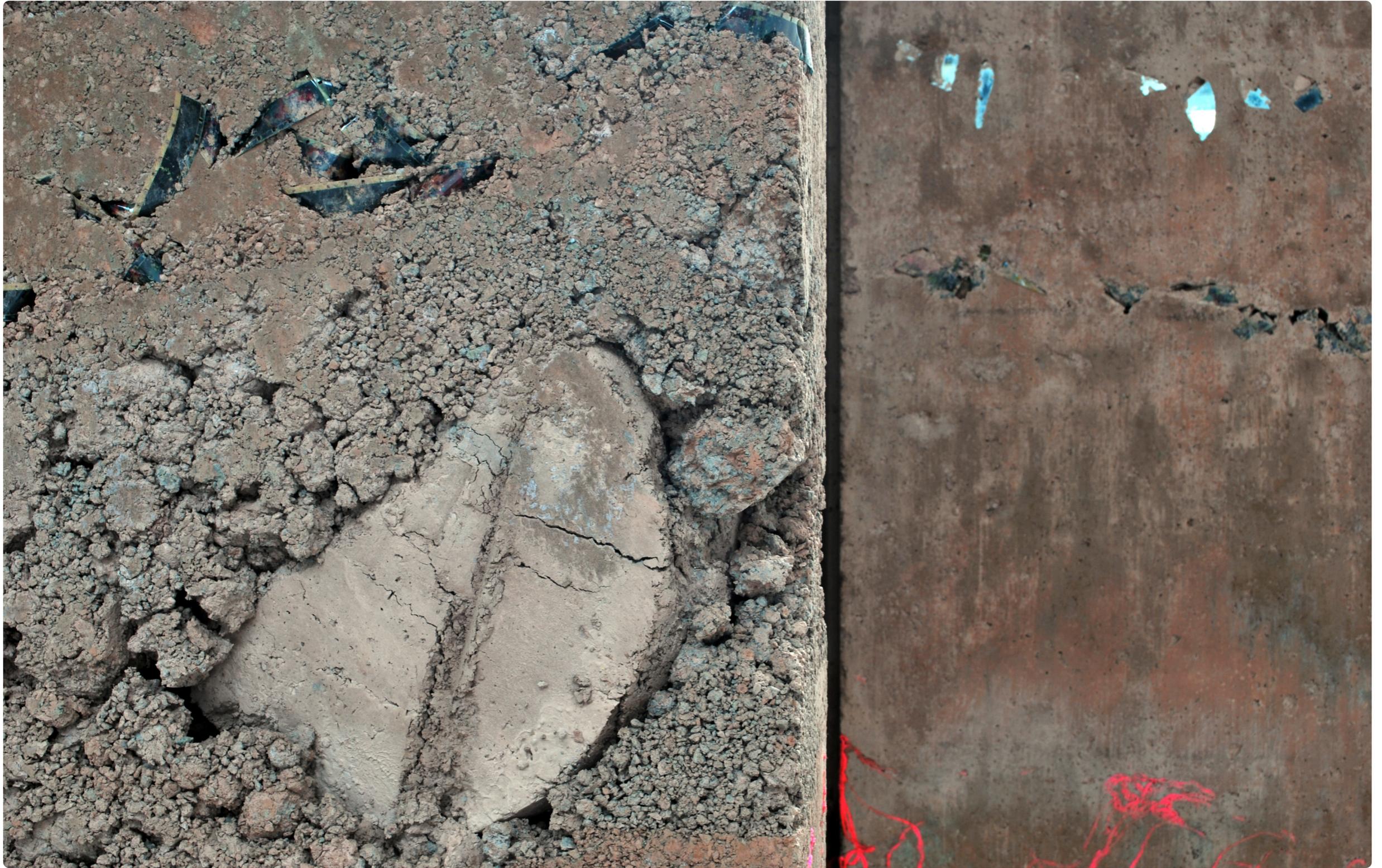
Detail of *Cahokia Byobu (Broken Screen)*, 2011
Mirror pane glass, rammed earth with cement, shells, mason's line, 16mm film strips, glass shards





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Cahokia Byobu (Broken Screen) with Sound and Light Show, 2011

Mirror pane glass, rammed earth with cement, shells, mason's line, 16mm film strips, glass shards, with two channel, three-phase light sequence, 8 minutes, looped, and digital audio file transferred from *Before the Sun*, 12 inch vinyl LP, 32 minutes, looped





Cahokia Byobu (Broken Screen) with Sound and Light Show, 2011

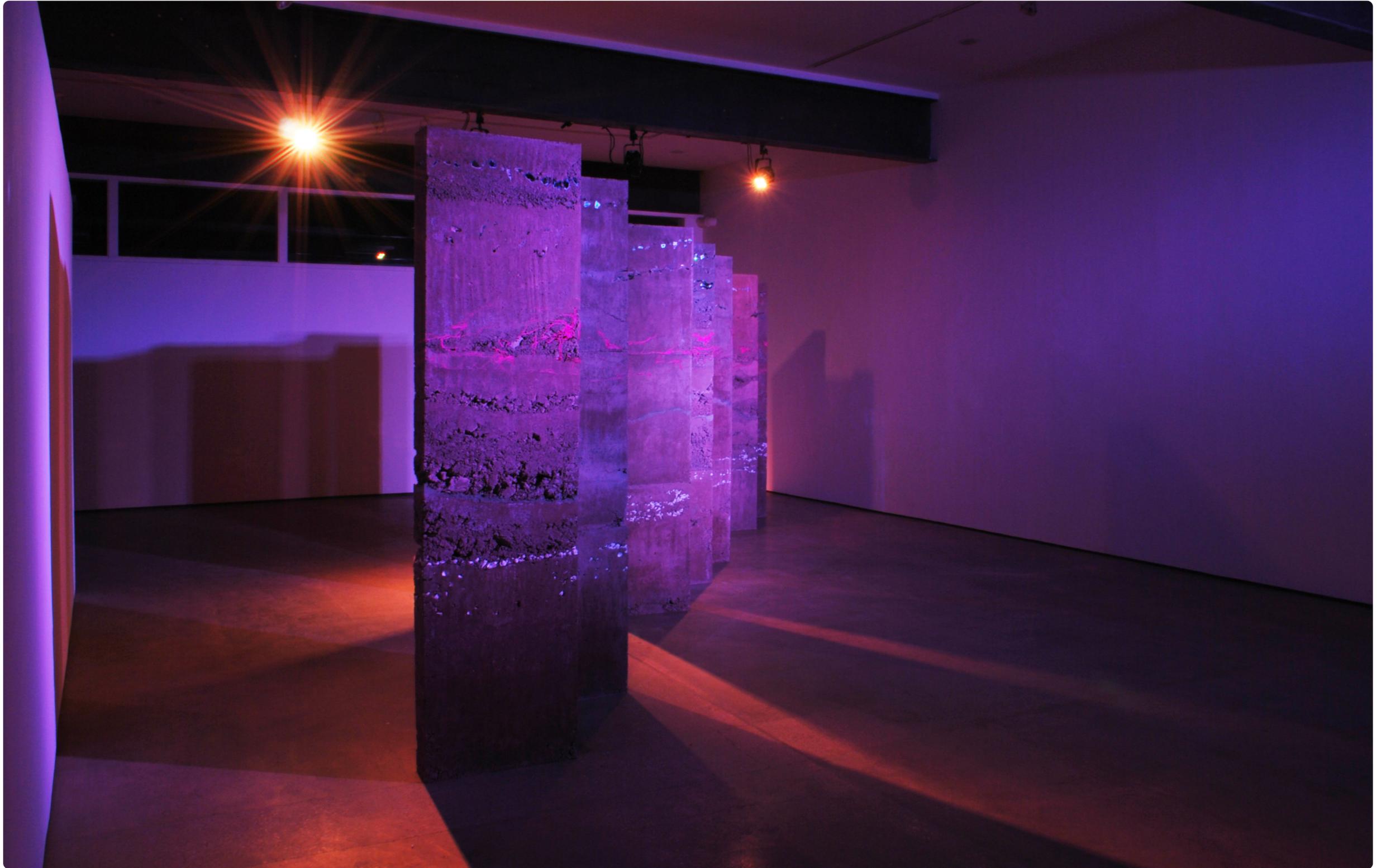
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Detail of *Cahokia Byobu (Broken Screen) with Light and Sound Show*, 2011





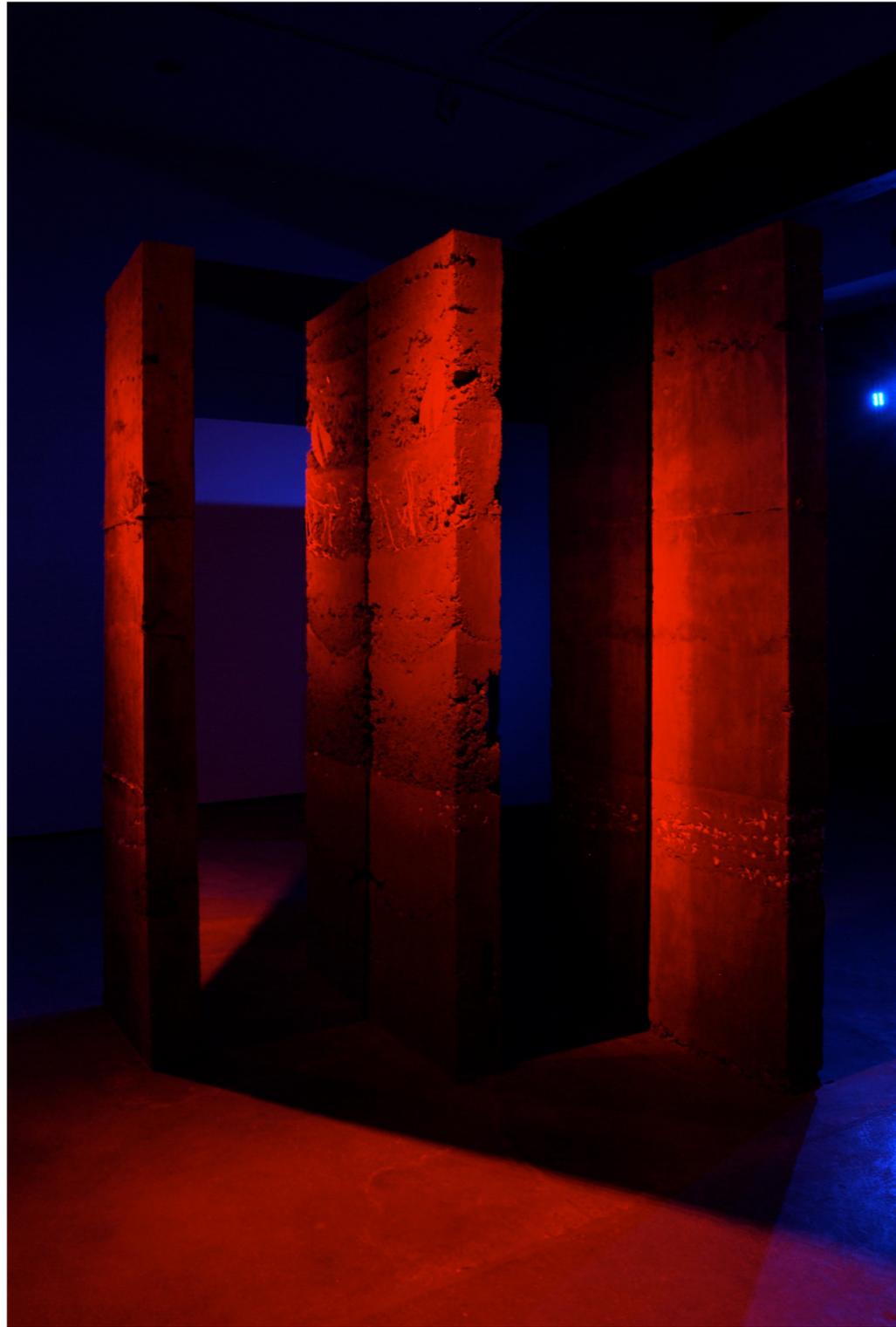
Detail of *Cahokia Byobu (Broken Screen) with Light and Sound Show*, 2011





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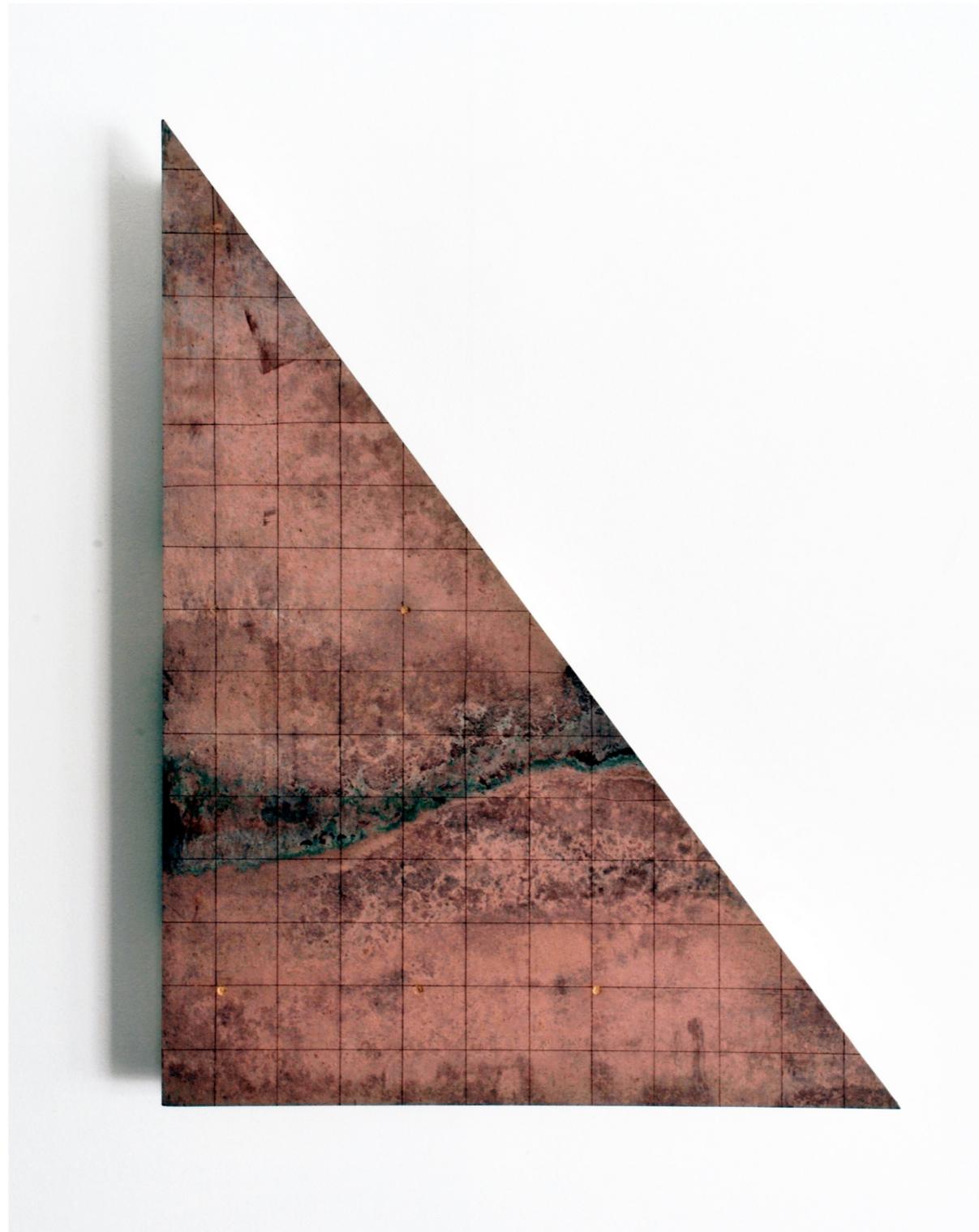
Detail of *Cahokia Byobu (Broken Screen)* with *Light and Sound Show*, 2011





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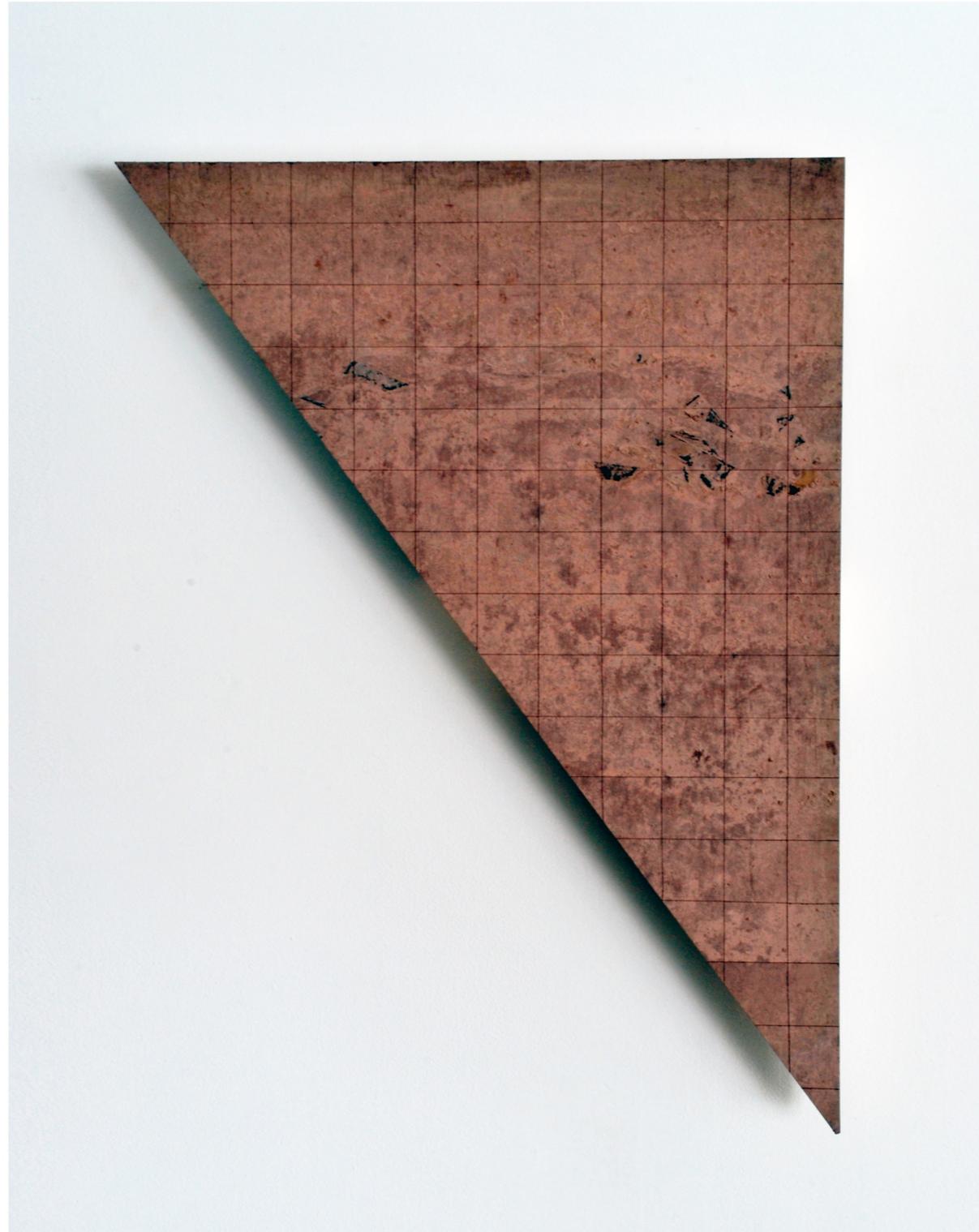




Shard B2a, 2011

Incision, earth, and cement on plywood with 2 x 4's, 23.5 x 31.5 x 2.25 inches





Shard C3b, 2011

Incision, earth, and 16mm film emulsion on plywood with 2 x 4's, 23.5 x 31.5 x 2.25 inches



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Karthik Pandian

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2012

Vilma Gold, London

2011

Elements of Style, White Flag Projects, St. Louis

2010

Unearth, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

Before the Sun, Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis (cat.)

1991, Curated by_Vienna 2010, (with Mathias Poledna), Galerie Meyer Kainer, Vienna, Austria

2009

Darkroom, Richard Telles Fine Art, Los Angeles

Selected Group Exhibitions

2012

Made In L.A., Los Angeles Biennial, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles

La Triennale, Intense Proximity, Palais de Tokyo

Group show, curated by Jay Heikes, Frederica Schiavo, Rome

Marrakech Biennale 4, Higher Atlas, Morocco

2011

On Forgery: Is One Thing Better Than Another?, LAXART, Los Angeles, curated by Andrew Berardini and Lesley Moon

US EST, Pepin Moore, Los Angeles, curated by Soo Kim

2010

Musee Los Angeles, Los Angeles

2009

Round Up, Richard Telles Fine Art, Los Angeles

2008

Space as a Space, Bonelli Contemporary, Los Angeles

2007

My Buddy: UCLA New Wight Biennial, New Wight Gallery, Los Angeles

2001

Al Nitaq Art Festival, Cairo

Texts

2012

[The LA Times](#)

2011

[Artweek.LA](#)

[The LA Times](#)

[E-Flux](#)

[Whitney Museum of American Art](#)

[Mousse](#)

2010

City Pages

Art in America

Education

2008, M.F.A, Art Center College of Design, Pasadena

2008, Staatliche Hochschule fur Bildende Kunste Staedelschule, Frankfurt, Germany

2003, B.A., Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island

Born 1981 in Los Angeles.

Lives and works in Chicago and Los Angeles.

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Karthik Pandian: Elements of Style

Matthew Strauss

Founder/Director

Jessica Baran

Assistant Director

Taylor Crossland, H. Lindsay Donahue, Simon Rhim, Mel Trad

Interns

All artwork courtesy the artist and Richard Telles Fine Art, Los Angeles.

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Special thanks to Dr. John E. Kelly, The Cahokia Mounds Museum Society, and Jay, Laurie, Paige and Rita Johnston.

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