

Kenna Doeringer brings multimedia art show to Axis Gallery

BY MITCHEL BOBO

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Artist Kenna Doeringer has a penchant for playing with mediums.

It makes sense then that Doeringer's latest project combines her roots as a sound editor for feature films with the imagery and soundscapes of less-trodden terrain. "A Perceived Sense of Silence" brings what Doeringer calls the "overlooked medium" of audio to Sacramento's Axis Gallery, with 16 listening stations relaying the sights and sounds of various locations. Visitors will also find prints of the sites coupled with small passages written by Doeringer, describing her observations and experiences of each area.

"I was at Fallen Leaf Lake, which is just west of Lake Tahoe, and as I was sitting there and just listening, I opened my eyes to see that I was covered in butterflies. All these butterflies just started landing on me," Doeringer said.

"Sitting and listening and hearing the world, you get to have these experiences and it was almost like a full immersion into these locations. Even the locations that I had been to before, it was a different kind of immersion. It was like melting into the tree or the

rock that I was standing next to. You become part of it."

Doeringer, a native New Yorker who refers to herself as a conceptual artist, tapped into previous excursions and tips from friends to find environments for the show, which vary between the sounds of lapping water in Mono Lake to the industrial percussion of jackhammers near a former nuclear testing site in the Black Rock Desert.

Doeringer said that she attempted to curate tracks evocative of each locale, but knows the format of the show will place the impetus upon gallery goers.

"When you're listening to audio, it's about what you see in your own mind. You're kind of leaving a lot to the viewer. Even in the conceptual or abstract world you're giving them a little bit of leeway, but you're dictating color, light and negative space. It's like the difference between watching a movie and reading a book," Doeringer said.

Doeringer said she drew influence from a John Cage composition titled, "four thirty-three," which instructed performers not to play their instruments. Instead, listeners were treated to the sounds of the surrounding environment.

As the exhibit's name suggests, Doeringer was

fascinated to tackle a project that begs the question of what silence really means. In a world inundated with notifications and alerts from devices, and contrasted with vows of silence and a Buddhist state of zen.

"We kind of push aside our audio experiences in favor of our visuals, but plug your ears the next time you go to see something and it looks very different from when you combine both of those senses."

The exhibit for "A Perceived Sense of Silence" will run through March 1, with a Second Saturday reception slated for Feb. 8, from 6 to 8 p.m.

If You Go

A Perceived Sense of Silence

Where: Axis Gallery, 625 S Street

When: Through March 1. Noon to 5 p.m. Friday through Sunday. 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday. Appointments available.

Cost: Free

More info: (916) 443-9900, axisgallery.org

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KENNA DOERINGER

Kenna Doeringer's latest exhibit at the Axis Gallery, "A Perceived Sense of Silence," pairs photos of settings and accompanying soundscapes captured firsthand.