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350 Words: Jeff Shore and Jon Fisher's "Reel to Reel" at McClain Gallery
January 6th, 2012 – AMY DAVIS



Jeff Shore and Jon Fisher, "Reel to Reel"

Composed of wall-mounted sculptures, sound and film, *Reel to Reel*, [Jeff Shore and Jon Fisher](#)'s current installation at [McClain Gallery](#), holds small revelations about the nature of machinery, art, music—and technology itself.

Walking into the dark gallery space, I found my attention drawn to the many different aspects of the installation. Wire-ridden sculptures with jittery moving parts cover three walls, while a fourth holds a projection screen with a murky film noir underway.



Jeff Shore and Jon Fisher, "Reel to Reel"

One sculpture tips a plate of sand, allowing the grains to slide from side to side. The machine that sifts the sand vibrates, adding to the ambient music. Indeed, it reminds us that vibration is a building block of music.

Reels and reeling abound in *Reel to Reel*: the shifting sands, a spinning apparatus akin to a printing cylinder, LPs rotating on makeshift turntables and of course the aspect of film. *Reel to Reel* comments on obsolete technologies, finding pleasure in the old, yet equally rendering them useless.

If some installations follow the mantra of “L’art pour l’art,” *Reel to Reel* seems to proclaim machinery for machinery’s sake, reveling in the clearly viewable operations of its functionality. The installation exists in the most complex of ways for the sheer joy of engineering.



Jeff Shore and Jon Fisher, "Reel to Reel"

The strange Hitchcockian camera angles of the black-and-white film, capturing interior views that feel eerily familiar, cause the audience to examine each sculptural machine closer. And the highly observant are rewarded—each shot of the film is in fact live, coming from within the sculptural pieces, where 14 cameras are shooting small-scale interiors and reflections created by the seemingly purposeless machines.

Even the less diligent viewer can feel a strange continuity in *Reel to Reel*. The tension-filled tonal music merges with a variety of music moments within each sculpture, from the technologic lap harp being plucked like a player-piano, to the old-school scratching of vinyl. Each small movement, noise and light is part of a symphony of engineering.

It seems odd, using such minute and exact technologies to create a work that feels so very convincingly vintage. Yet, inexplicably, that is also its biggest strength.

Jeff Shore and Jon Fisher: Reel to Reel, McClain Gallery, December 17, 2011-

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