

Artist Statement

Sometimes, Things Are Exactly as They Appear is an installation that re-constitutes a felled cherry tree in a series of open plywood boxes supported by a 2x4 scaffold-like structure. The configuration of the piece corresponds to the actual configuration of the tree as it once stood and as though it had just been felled at the stump. In this case the viewer is initially unable to see the tree for the forest of 2x4's supporting it.

With an approximate foot print of 30' x 30' and height of 13½' the installation as experienced by the viewer is beyond human scale. The piece is experienced first by approaching what was formerly the top of the tree. From this vantage point the forest of 2x4's dominates the space while the white boxes act more as clouds than vessels. As one circles around the installation the nature and scale of the tree slowly reveals itself until standing at the bottom of the stump where the tree can be seen as though one is lying on the ground looking up.

Sometimes, Things Are Exactly as They Appear was inspired by a chapter of Ronald Wright's *Short History of Progress* describing the event of felling the last tree on Easter Island, an act likely performed with full knowledge that it would render the island uninhabitable.

The boxes that contain the tree limbs are both archival vessels and shipping containers. The paradox of using more wood to re-present the tree than is actually in the tree is an echo of Wright's observations of human nature and self-destructive inclination. The standardized orthogonal geometry of the containers are an apropos form considering the nature of the built environment and the unyielding human desire to tame and regularize the natural world. The 2x4 structure, while apparently chaotic was in fact created using a series of strict rules. The hectic quality of the underbelly of the installation recalls the form of tree roots that have an equally clear logic of formation not obvious at first glance. *Sometimes, Things Are Exactly as They Appear* is a diorama in the "tree museum" of Joni Mitchell's "paved paradise".

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