

Des Moines Art Center is host of first-ever comprehensive survey of Tony Feher's work

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DES MOINES, IA.- On May 11, the Des Moines Art Center opened Tony Feher, which runs through September 2 in the Anna K. Meredith Gallery.

This exhibition and the accompanying monograph represent the first attempt at a comprehensive, in-depth consideration of Feher's career, seeking to reveal the richness, complexity, and impact of the artist's investigations through a careful selection of 60 key works that revolve around a very personal formal, material, and spatial vocabulary developed and refined over the past couple of decades.

Feher's art can be initially challenging in its apparent ordinariness, in particular when it comes to the nature of his materials. Some of this has to do with the fact that Feher's works are mostly made up of objects that generally play a passing role in our lives and are usually discarded after their contents are consumed, or equally disposable packing and storing material. Feher selects the elements for his sculptures with utmost care and restraint; despite their generic character, ready availability, and ubiquitousness, in his hands they become specific. He often lives with materials for a long time, finally singling them out for their formal qualities and potentialities. Claudia Schmuckli, Director and Chief Curator of Blaffer Art Museum explains, "Tony Feher's work stands out as an oddly optimistic ode to hope. Its power to move us lies in the artist's desire to carve out moments of profound solace and quietude, to restore order and beauty where there is chaos and ugliness, and to celebrate the power of creativity as humanity's most powerful weapon and achievement." Feher doesn't seek so much to transform as to accentuate the inherent characteristics of his artistic tools, to enable us to truly see and appreciate their value and beauty, or simply to see and appreciate things differently and anew. As Feher has summed it up, "Life is vulnerable, not fragile. Life perseveres. It has a tenacious grip. My art may appear fragile, but it holds on."

Born in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1956, Feher grew up mostly in Corpus Christi, with early stops in Florida and Virginia, pursuing a BA from the University of Texas at Austin. He now lives in New York City. Feher has exhibited extensively in the United States and internationally. His work can be found in the collections of many notable institutions, including the Art Institute of Chicago; the Baltimore Museum of Art; Dallas Museum of Art; La Coléccion Jumex, Mexico City; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York City; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City; and Hammer Museum, Los Angeles.

The exhibition opened at the Des Moines Art Center, Iowa, from May 11 through September 2, 2012; then travel to Blaffer Art Museum at the University of Houston, October 14 through March 17, 2013; the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, Massachusetts, from May 26 through September 16, 2013; and conclude at the Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York, where it will be on view from October 6, 2013 through February 16, 2014. The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully-illustrated 272-page monograph with essays by Russell Ferguson, Chair, Department of Art, UCLA, and exhibition curator Claudia Schmuckli, Director and Chief Curator of Blaffer Art Museum. The monograph is designed by Takaaki Matsumoto Inc., New York, published by Gregory R. Miller & Co., New York, and distributed by Distributed Art Publishers, Inc.