

The Art of John Calaway

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The Art of John Calaway By Surpik Angelini Twenty years ago I wrote a reflection which fully resonates with John Calaway's recent art:

"After nearly a century past, it is difficult to imagine the exhilaration avant-garde creators felt when technology altered their perception of space and time. More difficult yet, is to re-enact the synergy with which their body experienced speed and boundless space, as wheels and wings mechanically extended it. The Futurist and Dadaist poetic tropes of the body seen as an erotic machine attest in some measure to deep transformations in the human psyche. Nowadays, our awareness of such phenomena is blunted by our massive media consumption. We travel super speed highways, fly vast distances, and navigate the Internet in megabits while our daily rituals occur on a much slower pace as if levitating on a lightweight surface of a parallel reality. We seem to be in trance as we perform daily tasks, immersed as we are in an artificially accelerated field around us. It seems like few experiences pierce our clouded self-perception, allowing us to see how we see, feel how we feel, connecting our sensorial body to the outside world."

Much like the Futurist and Dadaist artists in the past, John Calaway's inventive artwork is not only transforming current artistic paradigms, but continues to expand the limits of our own imagination and self perception. His creative process is involved in the production of knowledge, exploring advanced digital technology, innovative modeling parameters, robotics, heat emission, lightweight space age materials, and most importantly, generating and assembling harmoniously integrated forms distilled from virtually produced shadows. From Plato's allegory of the cave to Duchamp's simulated projections from the Fourth Dimension, the philosophical, metaphysical and cultural implications of the subject of shadows in itself, has proven to be somewhat imponderable and enigmatic, but never as enticing as the untapped universe of Calaway's visual vocabulary based on "real" synthetic objects' shadows cast in virtual space.

To my understanding, Calaway transmutes deep technical knowledge into unfathomable and beautiful apparitions that come to inhabit our world as unequivocal works of art. We have every reason to expect further exciting artistic productions when he emphatically announces, "this is only the tip of the iceberg."