

KATE WERBLE GALLERY

83 VANDAM STREET NEW YORK, NY 10013



Beth Campbell, detail of *future past (mirror)*, 2017

Beth Campbell
If (at all) possible
May 13 – June 30, 2017

Press release

Beth Campbell continues her ongoing investigation of identity, multiplicity, and potential with nine mobile sculptures and a large-scale wall installation in her new solo exhibition *If (at all) possible*. Equal parts witty, morbid, and discerning, Campbell's works explode the everyday moment into a profusion of speculative possibilities. The tree diagram, a graphic structure used to visualize probability and hierarchy, becomes in Campbell's hands the means through which to channel anxieties about an overwhelmingly multiple future, her works forking like synapses or dendrite roots into a cluster of outcomes and endpoints.

future past (mirror), an ongoing wall installation, emerges from Campbell's prior series *Future Past Drawings* (2014-present), which trace the material and theoretical evolution of various objects and artifacts, providing a freewheeling and associative reading of historical progress that draws out idiosyncratic relationships between far-flung moments and things. The work is a nebula-shaped constellation of bits of black paper with rough, torn edges, each with a handwritten note in white, alongside bits of fragmented mirror, constructing the history of what Campbell terms "mirrorness." Connecting the use of reflecting pools in ancient Greece to the current proliferation of security apparatuses, the work looks to how the mirror in all its various guises has altered our relationship to reality, and how the objects and reflections with which we surround ourselves shape our sense of identity.

Hanging from the ceiling, several of Campbell's *Mobiles* repeat the root-like forms of her drawings, stripping them down to pure form and line. These works are composed of heavy steel rod and wire that successively splits off into lines of various lighter weights, their diminishing thickness parallel to their increasing number. They abstract the visual systems employed by Campbell in her drawings, removing their written captions and thus rendering opaque the exact causes of their forks. Unlike the tree diagram, used to outline potential possibilities, she looks here to the ways that physicists have sought to visualize theories of the multiverse and uses the form of her mobiles to refer to parallel worlds, suggesting an infinite number of alternate realities.

The works in the exhibition demonstrate the inextricable entanglements of past, present, and future. At a moment when this future seems increasingly precarious, her works suggest taking a moment to look both forward and back, taking into account actions and positions, and of those circumstances that have led to them. As Campbell notes, "while there's no such thing as a good decision, there's no such thing as a bad decision either."

Beth Campbell, (USA, b. 1971 in Illinois), received her BFA from Truman State University, Kirksville, MO (1993) and her MFA from Ohio University, Athens, OH (1997). Campbell has held solo exhibitions at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT (2017); Sculpture Center, Cleveland, OH (2010); Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY (2007); the Public Art Fund, New York, NY (2007); White Columns, New York, NY (2000); Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery, New York, NY (2008, 2005, 2004). She received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2011, a residency at Kohler Arts Center in 2010, and a Louis Comfort Tiffany Fellowship in 2009. Her work has additionally been shown at Manifesta 7 (Trento, IT); MoMA PS1 (Queens, NY); the New Museum of Contemporary Art (New York, NY); the Brooklyn Museum of Art (Brooklyn, NY); The Andy Warhol Museum (Pittsburgh, PA); and Artists Space (New York, NY) amongst others. Her work is in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art. Campbell currently lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.