

SIGHT LINES

More public art headed to Dell Medical School

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The Dell Medical School will soon get another public art installation.

Landmarks, the University of Texas' public program, announced today it will unveil a new installation comprised a mobile and companion graphite drawing by New York-based artist Beth Campbell on April 11. The site-specific commission, titled "Spontaneous future(s), Possible past," will be sited at Dell Medical School's Health Transformation Building.

Campbell's works will join other public art within the medical school buildings including Seymour Lipton's sculptures "Pioneer, Catacombs, and Guardian," Marc Quinn's "Spiral of the Galaxy" outdoor sculpture and Ann Hamilton's ethereal photographic portrait series, "Oneeveryone."

Campbell's piece for Austin is based on a drawing series she began in 1999 – "My Potential Future Based on Present Circumstances" – in which she used the model of a flowchart, she has written, "to explore the far-reaching map of possible futures arising out of everyday encounters."

Campbell begins each drawing by considering a seemingly mundane or relatable moment from her everyday life – i.e. "I just sat on my brand-new glasses while getting into the car" or "I need to buy a new pillow." She then builds gestural lines into a flowchart of possible outcomes unfolding from the event, ranging from fantastic to tragic.

For the Dell Medical School commission, Campbell's drawing makes parallels to spontaneous cognition, a newly developing branch of cognitive psychology that explores the random and involuntary thoughts that individuals have about their future.

The twisted steel wire mobile that accompanies Campbell's drawing mimics the complex structure of the human nervous system – and the complex structure of social networks.

In conjunction with the April 11 unveiling of "Spontaneous future(s), Possible past," Campbell will be joined in a public conversation with Timothy Morton, contemporary philosopher and professor of English at Rice University. Morton's research work explores the intersection of object-oriented thought and ecological studies.

The 5:30 p.m. talk will be in the UT Art Building Auditorium, located at 2301 San Jacinto Blvd., and will be followed by a reception.