



*Carrie Bodle. Video projection. Detail from Boltworks, 2002.*

Carrie Bodle

INTERVIEW BY MAX GOLDFARB

**Max Goldfarb:** Your work addresses the research of sensual states.

**Carrie Bodle:** Yes that's something I'm interested in... I think that my work comes from a place or a curiosity of a space whether that site is architecture or a history site or a city or any of the above... the sensual is something I strive for.

**MG:** So how do you select the case of maybe the project that I saw the documentation of in Ohio?

**CB:** Oh Boltworks?

**MG:** How did you find that place?

**CB:** That project came out of my first frustration and curiosities as an undergrad in working with project space. At the end of every semester our work was displayed together in a tight fitting... I realized how important to me that sense of space was...how sensitive one's work is to the space around it. There's a space within the art making process that I'm interested in... so I sought out an alternative space. It was quite an instinctive process... not knowing exactly what I was looking for... and to find a place that would allow for this kind of working.

**MG:** What do you mean allow for it, because it's an industrial place?

**CB:** Not necessarily an industrial place. To allow me to have a show there or allow for a time period for the making to happen.

**MG:** It sounded like a very small window or time, it sounded like a challenge?

**CB:** Not necessarily, I got access to the building in February and the show was in mid May.

**MG:** But you had said something about the show only being up for a weekend?

**CB:** Right, the show was only up for one day.

**MG:** So it was all the work before it that was the time you were referring to and then the time people had access to it

**CB:** And that was due to equipment needs. At that time I didn't have much equipment everything was begged, borrowed or stolen from the University or people I knew. So everything was limited to that weekend

**MG:** So it wasn't something that, I was going to ask you, was it much more interesting to be in there he working or to determine the project and have the exhibition the social kind of fun as a secondary owner or was it actually important that you had closure to this project?

***Boltworks, 2002***

An installation responding to the historical context of a 19th century bolt manufacturing facility. Incorporated with sound and video technology Bodle created an environment that involves the viewer in exploring the temporal and spatial dimensions of the sensual surroundings. The piece was structured utilizing two large industrial rooms one of which served as a reply to the over scale machinery and the other to an empty storage area. In the first room a directional array of bolt-making machines was juxtaposed with 22 hand-sized LCD screens displaying on one side of the corridor a walking backward sequence, and on the other side a video loop of freight trains passing by on the near-by tracks. The passage leads into the second room where four screen merge projections of a spinning bolt and the tide moving in on a Maine shore.

[http://web.mit.edu/cbodle/bolt\\_overview.htm](http://web.mit.edu/cbodle/bolt_overview.htm)



*Carrie Bodle. Installation detail from Boltworks, 2002.*

**CB:** I think it's important to have this closure and it's almost this internal process that happens, it doesn't have to be internal. Organizing it and the involving other people and the collaborating that happens on that scale with other people, but when that work happens you want to make it visible at some point. You want to turn it over to the public domain. And I think for those two nights that the show was up that was it for me that and also wanting to reach a goal in which this could be shown in more of a way that was accessible to people

**MG:** That was part of your anxiety with the gallery; did you feel like delivering it to a certain kind of person?

**CB:** No necessarily because I'm guessing that the people that would have gone to a gallery on campus would also have come to this show... but there were other people who were involved like the Berry family that had owned the building and the electricians, (the building had to be wired for electricity for the project), making the fabric scrims for the screens. It involves this other community aspect that was interesting for me. I think entering these spaces too, it's not just my representation or interpretation of the history

that happened there, or the space and what it means to me I would like it to be left open, I think that space invokes different feelings for everyone

**MG:** So is it something romantic about that space or the time period of this space?

**CB:** Oh, totally I think that project was very romanticized. It was my first time working in this way. It was new and maybe a little bit naïve, but then it was great and it was exciting for me.

**MG:** One of the first things I would think about would be the relationship to time because you've done this extensive research on the history of this place and it seems like this story is that you are so excited about and wanting to express, they have to do with things like the family who owned this space and what the building was used for and what was the larger context, more historically, and what was going on around the smaller stories, the more personal stories. So it's interesting, you're kind of creating this capsule to step into and see a non-linear window of simultaneous stories and all kind of layered and it sounds like to me people could grab onto one or another kind of thing that they respond to and maybe in the case of that installation, is there a way that they would know about this story or is more about the ghost or a trace of them?

**CB:** I think it's more about the trace of them (the viewer). And I think those stories and those curiosities and the researching and the history and that involvement is something that I really gravitate towards and grab onto when I first start the project. I think in this project specifically, there was more of that leftover in the final presentation than there has been since then. I think that for me they're interesting things to start on but once the project starts evolving, I don't want it just to be a time capsule, I don't want to be going back into 100 years because we are in the present – and that is naïve to ignore.

**MG:** So what would you hope then that someone participating in your installation will, be connected to?

**CB:** I think that's hard to say. I feel like I don't want to determine anyone's experience, everyone is going to have their own way of being with a project.

**MG:** The event of it.

**CB:** Right, or just the other people there – what it was like for the railroad tracks that night, trains going by – that was probably very much different than it was 100 years ago when they would stop and unload the bolts and reload the bolts. I think all of that is still surrounding, but it's a different time frame now.

**MG:** It's interesting, it sounds like this really theatrical relationship that you have to the work and that the work then has to the outside world. I picture you, anyway, after this long amount of preparation and getting power into the building and borrowing and stealing making all these adjustments to the last minute and then all of a sudden all these people who have never been in the space show up. And it's almost like you've been tending to this larger mechanism -building all these extensions of it that are visible and so that really does sound like an event. And it's also this ephemeral moment too, because a

couple days later there's nothing left in that space - and you have this document. And so you're also interested in, it sounds like, finding all these documents about the history in order to make this moment and then the result goes back into documentation – photographs and – you can present it as a story that you can try to open up again but really it's these artifacts that refer to your story of these stories.



Setting up installation of *Boltworks*, 2002.

**CB:** Right. Yeah, I agree.

**MG:** And so I guess I was just wondering what you think about the function of those artifacts.

**CB:** Well it's been something that's been hard for me to figure out, what to do about the documentation.

**MG:** But you must have been slightly steeped at that time – in art school – say for example, considerations about the non-site and the document and this sort of relationship to a place outside of the realm of the traditional art world and how do you represent it It comes back to the fact that for various reasons, there's a representation of that gesture.

**CB:** Yeah, I was aware of that but at the time – just to get the project off was such a feat, so the documentation suffered, and that was something I learned from – and these very

temporal projects, that's all that's leftover. And wanting to represent that or remembering what things felt like or trying to explain this body of work to other people. But it's that whole documentation problem – it doesn't even come close to – and it's very hard to represent what was there.

And then also just the setting up, so the human work of going thru and wiring and all of that as well as then the event of the night. And whether it was successful or not, that is how I choose to represent the project – and I like that. I think that that was for me it was successful in that way. I mean there are def things I'd like to fine-tune or the camera we used wasn't good enough and it didn't capture the video and some of the sounds very well and... It's just a process of learning, I think.

**MG:** I guess that observation about representing the work – I wonder – there still seems to be some reason that you would do that – as opposed to it just all leading to this one point and have the project be this sort of activity that happens within this period of time and it's over, it's a trace only...

**CB:** Completely. But it's just also figuring out how... you know, photographs didn't seem right, just one standpoint, because movement and time was so much a part of that project. Not even this research that lead up to it about the history but the time of being there that night and this walk-through that you did within the building or this walk-through through the large projections. And I think in some respects how maybe in more traditional sculpture and painting you would represent or document a piece would be with the correct lighting, the one ocular point of taking a snapshot, just doesn't work in these pieces. It's really about the movement and that time – that time-based documentation that has to happen as well.

**MG:** I think last time we talked a little bit about Lucy Lippard,<sup>1</sup> the idea of the dematerialized art object and it seems like a totally different criteria for wanting to work in that way than maybe some of the trends at that were going on at that period of time, thinking about reduction or elimination of the material or the material out of the particular context.

**CB:** I think it just comes out of a new generation.

**MG:** So it's kind of like a past reality experience that you bring to that place, as far as expressing a place it's still that place, you're not transforming it or disguising it to a different place you're just drawing more information and censoring the sensitivity to the place that you don't ever see or maybe don't even know and kind of just coaxing it out so that you

**CB:** Sometimes, I think it's also noticing a place. As artists we just want to notice what's going on in the world around us and it's taking a second look, listening, feeling what that space is presenting to us and trying to interpret that and trying to figure out what's there and figuring out why that spark happens.

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<sup>1</sup> Lippard, Lucy. *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972*. New York: Praeger, 1973.