



Left: Richard Purdy, *Bindu: The Big Bang*, 2010. 40,000 fluorescent elements, rain-making system and mixed media, 6,571 sq. ft. Below: Douglas White, *Black Sun*, 2010. Tire, yew root, steel, and MDF, 209 x 364 x 84 cm.

back on view at Shawinigan Space through September 25.

—John K. Grande

DUBLIN

Douglas White

Kevin Kavanagh Gallery

Douglas White's recent work sets up a number of contrasting references that convey a powerful sense of mystery. Grouped under the alchemical title "Black Sun," his sculptures and drawings evoke light and dark and speak of powerful bursts of energy and their residues. His mediums range from octopus ink to electricity, bringing us into contact with atmospheric turbulence and enigmatic sea creatures. Calling attention to man's ongoing fascination with the forces of nature and our attempts to simulate them, the exhibition engendered complex responses. Feelings of wonder, apprehension, and respect all marked the experience.

An initial encounter with the show, however, kindled a deflated impression—the lack of color and largely

two-dimensional characteristics of the work induced a misleading air of restraint. At first glance, only the sculpture *Black Sun* (2010) distinguished itself from rest of the exhibition, which featured a suite of drawings on MDF panels mounted on walls and on an interconnected trio of tables. The sculpture's empty ring—an iconic anti-sun assembled out of yew roots and an exploded tire—delineates virulent combustion in all its radiant glory. Representing expansive growth and decay, it stands like a specimen awaiting examination. Its blackened and twisted form also acted as a key to the rest of the show. The same qualities were reflected in the lines radiating across the MDF panels in *Lichtenberg Table* and *Lichtenberg Drawing I & II* (all 2010). The former consists of intricate fern-like scars that replicate the action of lightning on the earth's surface; the latter uses octopus ink to describe the creature's sinewy presence.

The Lichtenberg works are all about transformation, at a human scale. *Lichtenberg Drawing I* mirrors the height and span of the average pair of outstretched arms. *Lichtenberg Table*, which includes a transformer to generate electrical current and nails to serve as points

of contact, investigates fractal burn—a "drawing" produced when high voltage travels through insulating material, recording its path in a series of finely rendered patterns. According to White, the process occurs slowly and produces a copious amount of smoke. Knowing this, we can imagine him working carefully, his bent figure gradually being eclipsed by a cloud. The action vaguely reminds us of the craft kits that let children burn designs into wood, but White's surface alteration method holds a much higher degree of personal risk. Visualizing the artist at work also conjures associations with performance art and ceremonial rituals.

White's work demands time, but the process of looking is as transformative as the objects themselves. There are allusions to the workshop or laboratory, and the works assume an extraordinary air that contradicts their physicality. The resulting sense of magic leaves viewers in a speculative state wherein the mind oscillates between comprehension and incomprehension.

—John Gayer

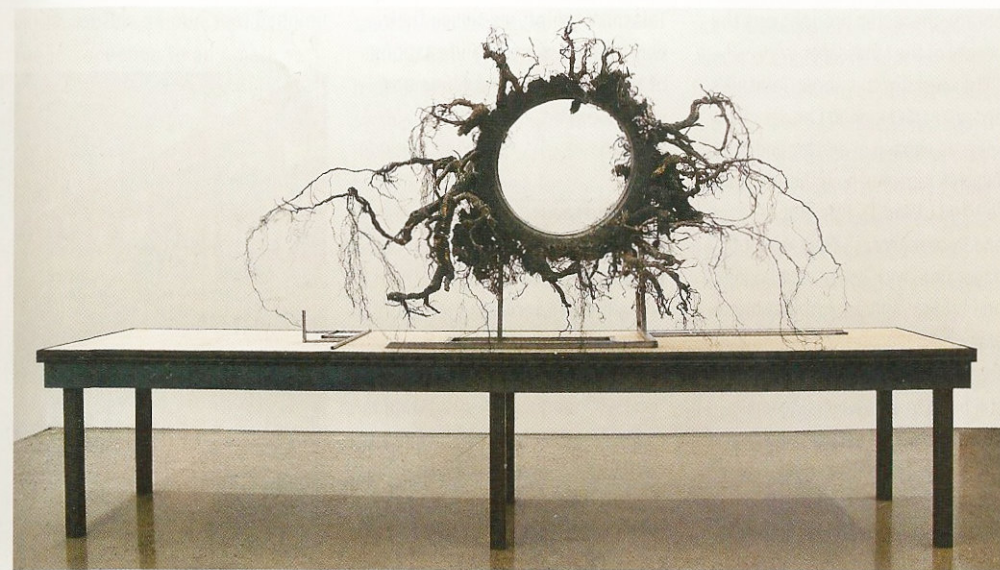
MANTUA, ITALY

Marcello Morandini

Casa del Mantegna

The work of a living sculptor who describes the "infinite and eternal world of geometry" might, or might not, fit happily into living space planned with geometrical rigor by a 15th-century painter and now put to use as a gallery. Andrea Mantegna designed his house in Mantua to have an unadorned brick exterior, to be precisely square, and to encase a circular courtyard as a grand surprise within. The work of Mantua-born Marcello Morandini recently elbowed its way into Mantegna's oddly shaped rooms and made itself comfortable within their spaces. Respect for geometry wins.

Morandini's career has moved seamlessly across architecture,



TOP: OLIVIER CROTEAU