

COVER IMAGE

Watch Over Central Park (Detail), 2006

Introduction

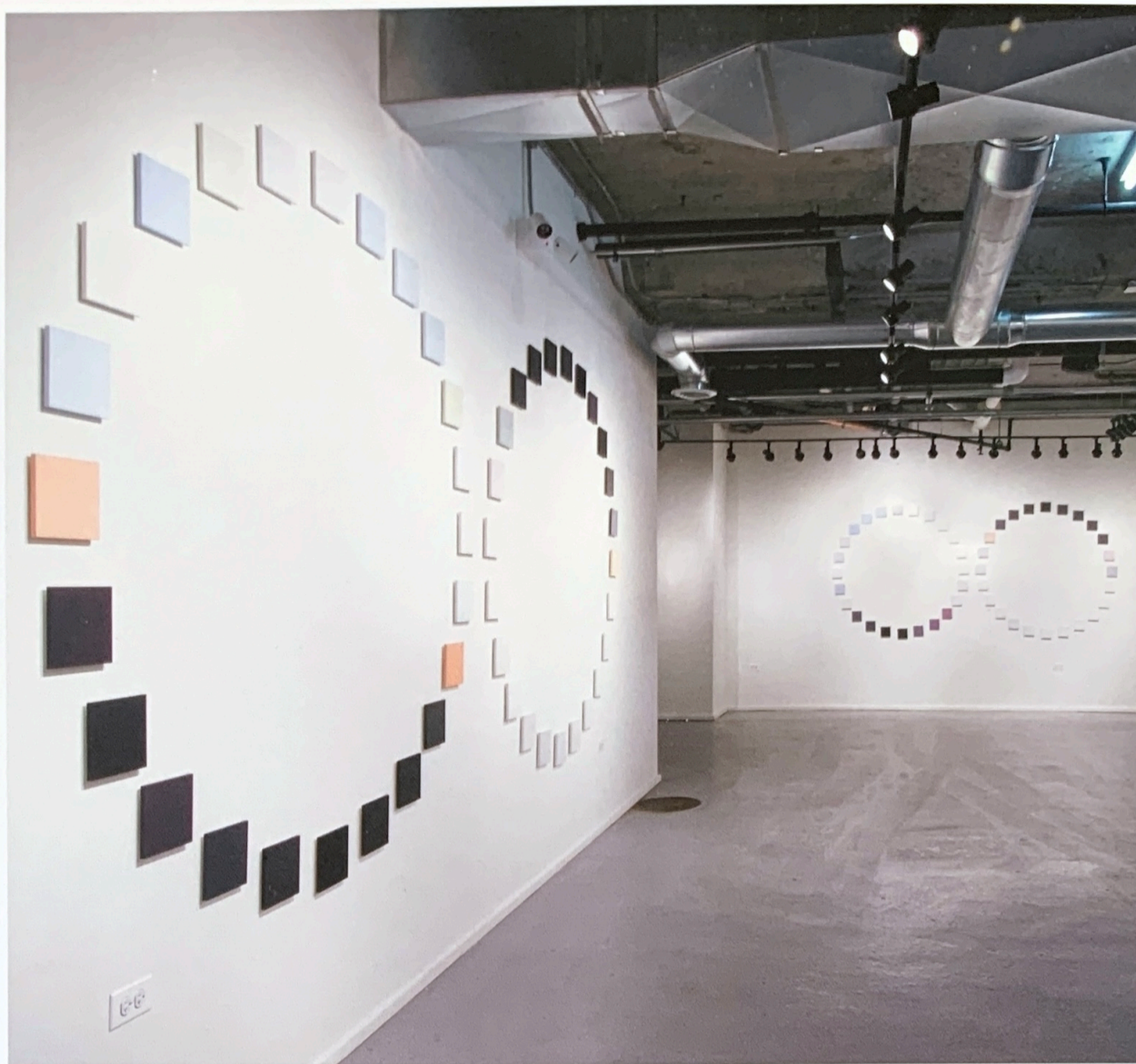
BACK IN THE “dark ages” when I studied art history, one of the distinguishing characteristics of a visual arts work was that it was the only art form that did not involve real time. A symphony takes a certain amount of minutes to perform, as does a ballet. A play likewise, even if read silently, takes a certain amount of time to peruse, as does a novel or a poem. A painting or sculpture, however, can be glanced at in a second or studied in-depth for hours and has no innate duration.

Andy Warhol’s real-time films began to blur this distinction. Were they meant to be viewed as films if they had no plot or characters, if you could fall asleep while viewing them and not miss a thing? Or were they visual works of art with a different set of rules — extensions of Warhol’s paintings, a real-time commentary about the banality of everyday existence?

Ben Whitehouse’s work puts this conundrum to rest. Like his paintings, his digital works are beautifully conceived and meticulously executed visual art works that deal with notions about the place of the natural world in the twenty-first century. They can be seen in a minute or studied for hours and they reward the viewer in direct relation to the time spent viewing them. Slow down and enter into Whitehouse’s world — we can promise that you will leave our galleries with a lighter step and a refreshed spirit.

We thank the artist for graciously lending his work to this exhibition, Susan Isaacs for her insightful essay, and Panasonic for providing the large plasma screens for this installation.

Maxine Gaiber
Executive Director
Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts



GALLERY VIEW

Watch Over Central Park, 2006

Oil on forty-eight 5" x 5" panels with magnets
96" x 180"

ABOVE

Revolution: Central Park, 2006

Digital video presented in real time, 24 hours