

"In space,
No one can hear you scream"
- *Alien*, 1979

Right? Of course the real problem here is the impossibility of complete, harmonious, and effective communication, not the warbling, seething approach of some vicious [a]lien and our bellowed reply to it. Similar cries have been made upon viewing a Neutra House, or other utopian, modernist designs. Tied up in this problem - of a scream being heard, of communication - is the development of social conditions and shelters that might promote efficient and clean living for either space- or earth-bound humans to hold exchanges within. So it is with Holly Ward's *The Future is Now*. Fusing home craft and high architectural principles, the installation is striking in two opposing ways: its internal buckyball clarity, and the exposure of its raw insides and backsides.

A smattering of mics embedded in the piece capture sounds made by viewers. These noises are regenerated into transmuted palpitations which small speakers release. The chuggings and whispers spilled out echo those used in science fiction genre films to evoke uncertainty, the ones that cause audience members to mutter "Don't go in there" or the effects used to near excess within closings and introductions to many New Wave albums. Like the Dostoevskyan strains of the pre-Clooney *Solaris* [1972, 165 minutes], New Wave might have become the socialist answer our world-weary hearts yearned for when we found that toting Guy Debord between our Comp Lit and Philosophy classes incited not loving kindness nor the dismantling of societal constraints, but ridicule and hopeless misunderstandings.

Ward's interstitial passage could form the guts of Tarkovsky's space station or Tomorrowland's Space Mountain. Both are dreams of what might exist, somewhere, in a time that is not now - dreams that have decayed, but dreams that were originally formulated from commercially available hardware and furniture. Incised from an idea of modular joints, hallways and shafts, *The Future is Now* fabricates the utopian vision of bedroom closets to come: a perfect fusion of form, function, and white geometry. After the same fashion, its walls, appearing sturdy from the interior, are just as provisional and speculative as the doctrine of modernism. Might the supremacy of the straight line be enough to jar us out of fuzzy-thinking and disrobe the spectacle? Has it accomplished as much so far?

Viewing *2001: A Space Odyssey* while listening to Joy Division's *Substance*, didn't we expect something more from that precocious little bastard, *The Future*?

Don't go in there.

The Future is headed nowhere.