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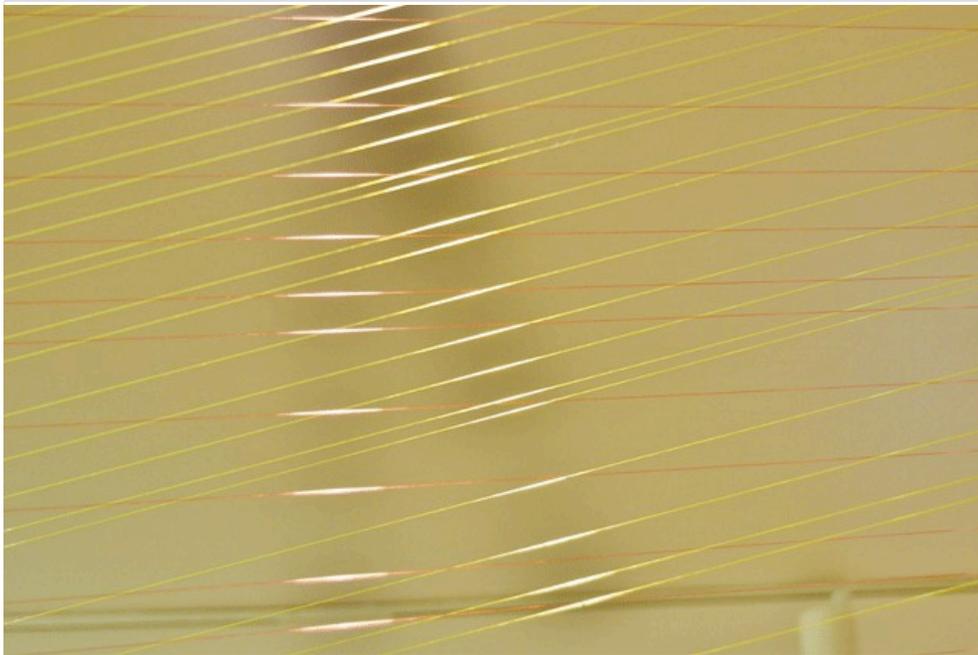
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Andi Steele's installation *Interspace* succeeds in minimalism

Chastain Arts Center's new exhibit is quiet and contemplative

by Felicia Feaster



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STRING SECTION: Installation view of Andi Steele's *Interspace*

Andi Steele's installation *Interspace* at Chastain Arts Center is so minimal and stealth, viewers might miss the taut lines of monofilament suspended overhead and risk being garroted as a result.

Steele's work can make you feel like a meek, unsuspecting ladybug or housefly contemplating a dewy spider web. *Interspace* is composed of eight clusters of line strung across the gallery. Hung at varying heights, the yellow and red filaments at times intersect. Spotlights on the ceiling pick up the lines' colors depending upon where the illumination hits. The effect is Pink Floyd cosmic meets Dan Flavin minimalist.

Minimalist sculpture and installation art focus on a viewer's presence as a spectator and how it relates to the space. For fans of those genres, the piece

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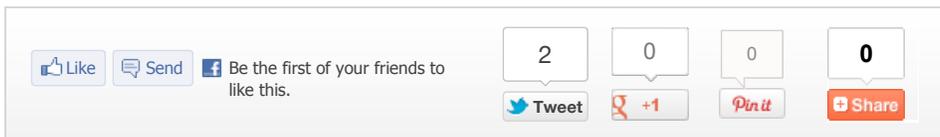
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probably does succeed in its ability to awaken the sensation of encountering and relating to a strange, new visual disturbance. You feel like a small child pussyfooting around an unfamiliar room you maybe shouldn't be in, or a space traveler trying to wrap your brain around some intergalactic architecture. Though entirely static, the lines become animated by shifts in light and position.

For me *Interspace* induced a slight feeling of panic that I would misjudge or not see one of the crisscrossing wires and either separate it from the wall — thus ending any future chances of reviewing shows — or end up with a gory and difficult to explain monofilament wound across the bridge of my nose like a dazed trout on the wrong side of a fishing line. Taller people have even more reason to worry.

Choose your operative analogy: clothes line, guitar string, light beam, sunrays, the invisible filaments of our telecommunications-defined world. The work summons up any number of associations.

Interspace isn't jaw dropping or life changing. It is as quiet and contemplative as a sigh — an exhalation more than an exclamation. While the installation illustrates an admirable effort on the part of Chastain Arts Center director Karen Comer Lowe to show a range of work from the cerebral to the heartfelt, it can also feel unnecessarily slight. In such a small and not especially architecturally dramatic space, the installation's effect is underwhelming. With more room to roam and the chance to demonstrate more of Steele's work, *Interspace* might have more heft. It's also hard not to suppress a feeling of annoyance that a North Carolina artist (though a University of Georgia MFA grad) with a very niche appeal has been imported into a city with too few venues to show off its native talent. Many local artists would no doubt delight in the opportunity to unleash their singular vision on this enduring Atlanta gallery space, given the chance.



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