



The Cannibal Lot

Saturn and Cronus

Don Miller + CAFKA

Kitchener, 2014

Radical Real Estate

Summary

Don Miller is an idea-based visual artist, intuitive carpenter and poet who lives near Shelburne, Ontario. Miller works in a number of media including performance, video, installation, experimental architecture, snow sculpture and written word. He also works with stone, steel and wood to generate income to fund his artistic pursuits.

Miller took 2 derelict houses and painted them black & white for CAFKA, the Contemporary Art Forum Kitchener and Area, calling it Saturn & Cronus referring to the Roman & Greek names for the same god. These two houses were very controversial, residents were pushing for the houses to be demolished for 20+ years as they were used as sites for prostitution and drug use. The stark colours intentionally created tension within the neighbourhood. Miller felt as though the deterioration was a reflection of the energy associated with the houses. The houses were demolished after CAFKA ended.

Lessons

- Dialogue through controversy: this project encouraged community dialogue, as people saw these houses being painted invoking curiosity, people started opening up to Miller about their frustration towards these houses.
- Simple elements such as light and dark can transform the meaning entirely.
- Temporary art can serve as a powerful catalyst for engaging communities, challenging perceptions, and drawing attention to underlying social issues, even if the installations are short-lived.

