

# ALEX HIBBITT

## RHIZOME: FALLING

**Porcelain, felt, steel cable, magnets**

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*Rhizome* is a body of work exploring ideas of complexity, connectivity, and relationships between two and three dimensions. Constructed from a single abstracted “branch” form, it multiplies across and out into the space, intersected by numerous floating shapes made from colored felt (which suggest the mapping of space or nodes of data). These felt shapes are the unwrapped skins of my ceramic collection, from family heirloom to knickknack, removed from the various layers of hierarchical power inherent in such objects. Designed to almost completely fill an exhibition space with the energy and complexity of rhizomatic growth combined with the graphic quality of a drawing, the modular nature supports the adaptability of this work to function in spaces of varying sizes and configurations—especially architectural spaces that have their own characters and histories, as opposed to within the white space of the traditional gallery environment.

*Rhizome: Falling* was built specifically for the Weston Art Gallery thus the configuration of elements has shifted to reflect a less organic system than in other iterations. It is as though it is acted upon by the force of gravity, slowly collapsing towards the ground.

The present time is one of interconnectedness. We are bound up in an interwoven network of multiple systems that govern our interaction with the world and each other. Some of these systems are visible, most are hidden and many are too complex for us to visualize. The rhizome has become a philosophical idea of how to imagine these relationships, as well as being a particular form of biological structure. I am caught up in the friction between these two understandings of the word, creating a work, whose physical substructure may speak more to “root,” but which is intended to speak to the concept of rhizome as a philosophical and aesthetic model.

The dichotomous relationships that exist between reality, expectation and ideal are drivers in my sculptural practice. In a present in which much of experience is filtered and mediated through electronic media, I am attempting to rediscover where exactly the site or place of experience resides, particularly in relation to the notion of landscape or place. In this work in particular, I am exploring the manner in which translation of information within and through the digital arena can address issues that include authenticity and labor, the handmade and the industrial, and relationships between art, craft, and design.

Alex Hibbitt