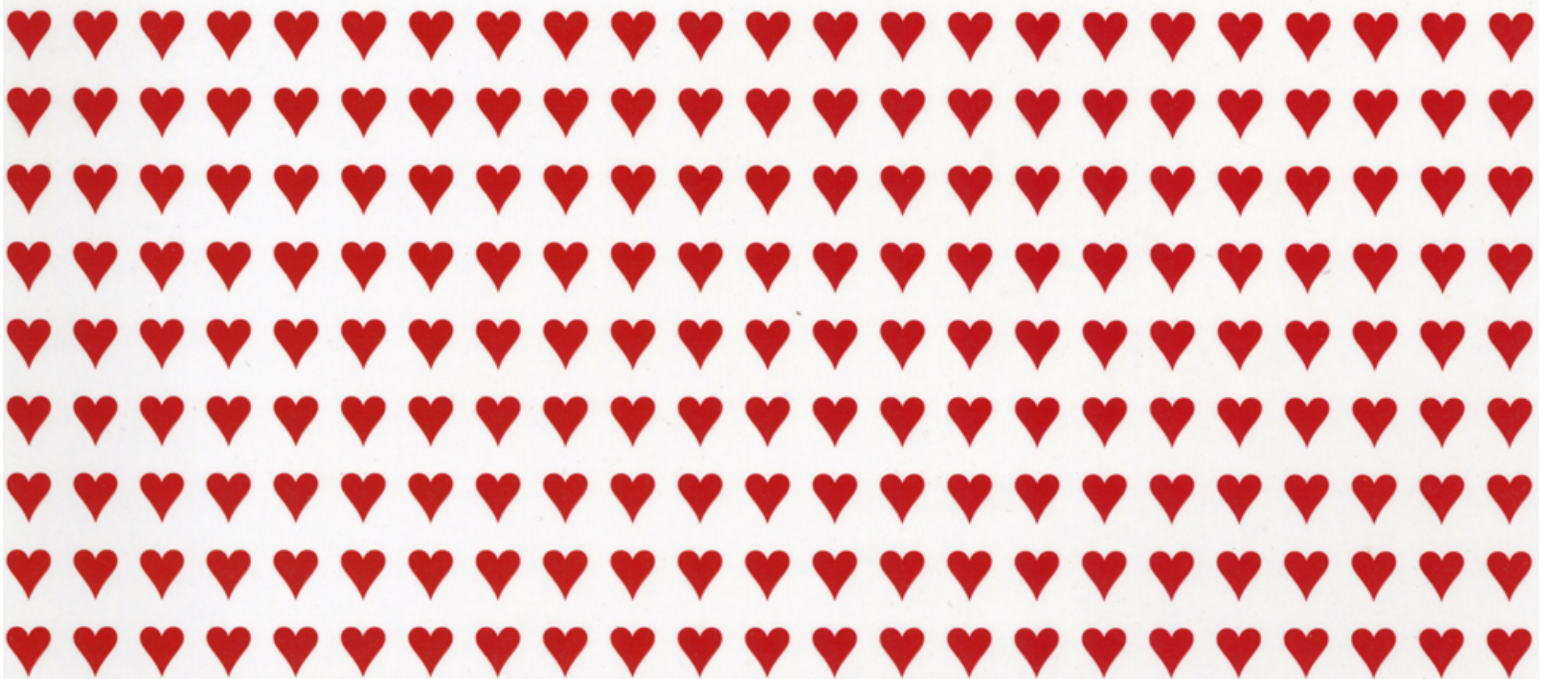


HEARTLAND

SMART MUSEUM OF ART VAN ABBEMUSEUM



SCOTT HOCKING

Born 1975, Redford Township, Michigan (US)
Lives in Detroit, Michigan

I've never liked the term "Heartland." It's been an advertising tool and political buzzword for long enough to make me cringe. Images of working-class, denim-decked Marlboro men having a Bud after work; commercials for pickup trucks with country-rock soundtracks; corn fields and cows; even George Bush. The word itself doesn't bother me, but it's been simplified and stereotyped. In reality, the Heartland combines the Midwest, the Great Lakes, the Great Plains, the Rust Belt, the Bible Belt, and the Mississippi Basin. It's part Dust Bowl, part Appalachia, part North, part South, and everything in between. Heartlanders are as diverse as the landscape.

Wherever I go, the history and people of that place influence my artwork. I explore my surroundings for things forgotten or kept out of sight, gathering information, images, and materials. I'm often inspired or bothered by what I find. Although I am influenced by the past, and how humans have interacted with nature through history, I am equally affected by current events. I try to present viewers with issues I believe are important and things they might have overlooked, such as learned ideas of beauty and ugliness.

In Detroit, I've worked with everything from abandoned industry to former sites of ancient earthworks, collaborating with thousands who once lived or worked there and used the same materials and spaces. I've experienced the Motor City on foot, found solace within massive, empty factories and overgrown neighborhoods, and discovered beauty in the decay and transformations. —SH

For over ten years, Scott Hocking has based his art within the crumbling streets and buildings found in the most devastated sections of Detroit, creating sculpture from scavenged materials and photographing urban sites. His work marks Motown's transformation from a globally famous engine of American industry and culture to a sparsely populated territory, where semirural landscapes now exist within once-dense areas of the city. One recent series of photographs focuses on a pyramid that Hocking built within a former auto-industry building. The building has been stripped by scavengers and infiltrated by nature: stalactites like those found in natural caves formed as water dripped from storey to storey. Over months, through the changing seasons, Hocking revisited the building, using floor tiles to add new layers to his pyramidal sculpture. Other photographs by Hocking included in *Heartland* present additional sites where nature and culture are coming to new terms within Detroit.

OPPOSITE TOP TO BOTTOM:

Skylight Forest, Roosevelt Warehouse, 2008

Ziggurat-East, Summer, Fisher Body Plant #21, 2008

CAROL JACKSON



