

**IN THE VALLEY OF THE SUN**

## IN THE VALLEY OF THE SUN

Kevin Cooley and Phillip Andrew Lewis

**In the Valley of the Sun** is a multi-media installation consisting of three new works which navigates the perception of time and its connection to place. According to ancient legends of local Native American tribes, the moon chose the Sonoma Valley to be its permanent resting place. Within this idea of finality exists a reference to time-keeping and, specifically, an 'ending' or 'final moment' where destination is reached. Using this notion as metaphor, and alluding to the geography surrounding the SSU Art Gallery, the artists explore horological concepts through the mechanics of obsolescent electronics.

Sharing its name with the title of the exhibition, **In the Valley of the Sun** forges an alignment between the Sonoma Valley, the quartz crystal mines in the foothills of the Sierras, and the shoreline of Bodega Head. Featuring twelve large televisions hanging from the ceiling in the shape of an inverted valley, the work presents an arched view of the open sky from mountains to ocean. Each of the screens receives a live video feed from one of twelve corresponding CCTV cameras mounted on the roof above and pointed to sequential portions of sky, much like markers on an overly complex sundial. This creates a chiaroscuro of electronic skylights tracing an imaginary latitudinal line connecting these geographic locations and the works in the exhibition.

Alluding to vast crystal deposits located one hundred miles to the east of the gallery, **Quartz Array** is a clustered configuration of 365 refurbished digital alarm clocks. This chorus of numeric synchronization, or lack of, provides a glowing, repetitive and familiar form of measurement. Depending on quartz crystals for synchronicity, which is never fully obtained, the piece exemplifies human aspirations for accuracy and perfection.

**Tide Over** is an unorthodox marker of the passage of time which measures the horizontal distance between low and high tide along the shore of Bodega Head, a promontory on the coast twenty miles west of the gallery. Imagery of waves crashing this beach plays on a VHS tape loop which stretches across the gallery in a length equal to the tide's reach. In this point of view shot, the water crawls closer and closer until it washes over the lens, short-circuiting the VHS Camera, and abruptly ending the recording. The loop is witness to the last images the camera was able to capture before its destruction—a testament to the cyclical nature of life.

**In the Valley of the Sun** is the fourth solo exhibition by Kevin Cooley and Phillip Andrew Lewis and their first in Northern California. The two artists met and began collaborating together while Artists-in-Residence at the Bemis Center for Contemporary Art. Their first collaborative commission, *Through the Skies for You*, won the 3-D Award at ArtPrize 2013 (Grand Rapids). Their work has been shown at Kopeikin Gallery (Los Angeles), Zeitgeist Gallery (Nashville), Pierogi Gallery (New York), Sonce Alexander Gallery (Los Angeles), and Kendall College of Art and Design (Grand Rapids). Earlier this year they released a limited edition unique phonograph and print box set as part of their project **Harmony of the Spheres**. In the foreword of their recently published book—**A Short Period of Intense Collaboration**—critic Michael Wilson describes their practice, stating that “shared fascination with such natural occurrences and their sometimes-unexpected intersections with human culture have already made their collaboration extraordinarily fruitful, but far from being a fait accompli, it is still evolving, its fusion of the observed and the imagined resulting in a living methodology and a set of works that are genuinely—and thrillingly—experimental.”

**In the Valley of the Sun**

twelve 39-inch flatscreen TVs  
displaying live video from  
twelve roof mounted  
closed-circuit cameras  
2014



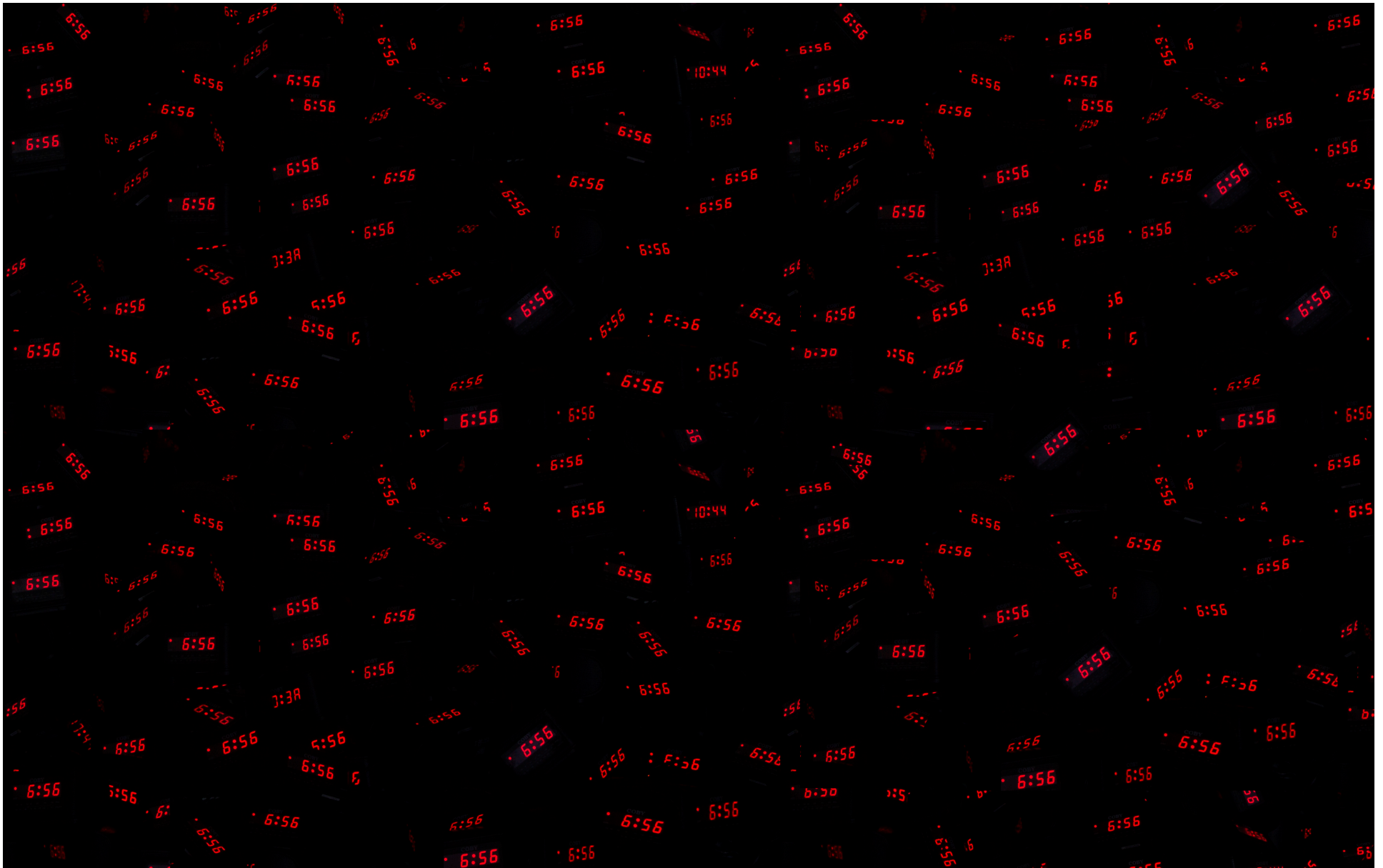




**In the Valley of the Sun**

details from gallery and roof

2014



**Quartz Array**

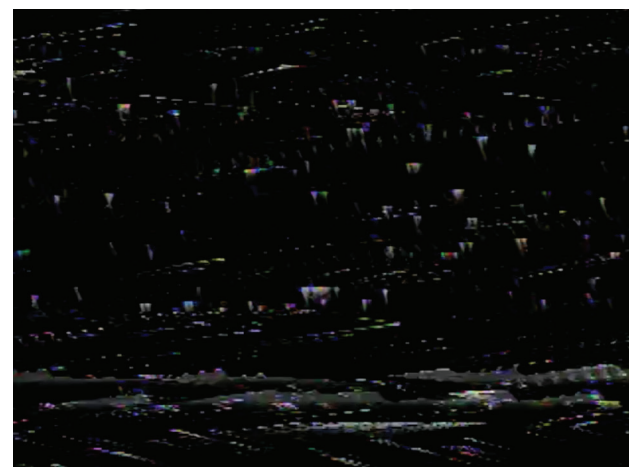
365 digital alarm clocks  
2014



### **Tide Over**

vhs video loop installation  
modified vcr, projector, 75-foot vhs loop  
2014





## Tide Over

video loop sequence stills

2014

kc@kevincooley.net

phillip@phillipandrewlewis.com