

## Introduction from *Broken Landscape II*

Good works of art create immediate bodies of knowledge through an aesthetic and visceral realm directly connected to the emotional and intellectual body of the viewer. If they are really good, they continue to make this connection through time as history, in effect, adjusts itself to them – not the other way round. *The Sphinx* and *Mona Lisa* come to mind as structures and images whose very reticence to reveal their full meanings impose an impressive condition of continuing interpretation. The more information we have about them, the more their meanings morph into further layers of complexity. As they emerge, newer methodologies from the sciences and the humanities are brought to bear on them as their enigmatic forms continue to frustrate the full status of truth and fascinate the possibility of it at the same time.

In other words, good works of art promote and encourage discourse or discursivity. Blane De St. Croix's monumentally miniature sculpture, appropriately entitled *Broken Landscape II*, does just that. Without commenting directly on historical boundary architecture such as the Berlin Wall, the Israeli Wall or the Great Wall of China, to name a few well-known ones, *Broken Landscape* carefully reconstructs at a highly reduced scale the geology and social material surround of a selected slice of the uncompleted USA wall on the border with Mexico at Eagle Pass, Texas. This new wall and its virtual surveillance substitutes, in reality, are at the many crosses of discussions of controversial immigration policies; human, animal and environmental rights; a highly active class of smugglers moving in both directions (drugs, armaments, humans, cash etc.) and even the notion of nationhood itself. By situating itself in the space of the viewer and the mirror image of the viewer, the sculpture manages both to be suggestively benign as a representation and highly provocative by virtue of its implied content. And the conversations it spurs make of it a persuasive object.

—Bruce W. Ferguson, Director of Future Arts Research @ ASU