

Vulnerable Ecologies  
Exhibition Statement  
Susan Stockwell

The exhibition *Vulnerable Ecologies* is made entirely from massive quantities of recycled computer components that have been manipulated and transformed into a sculptural installation. Highlighting the materials beauty the forms begin to resemble architectural forms and organic matter, seeping into the gallery space and surrounding us with their toxic exquisiteness. The computers have been dissected, their innards exposed, revealing the underbelly of the machines we take for granted, an autopsy of our consumer society.

Stockwell first worked with computer components in Taipei, the home of the computer and electronics industry in 2008. Here she made the installation *B-side Ecology* at the Hong's Foundation for Education and Culture, Mimi space.

In Houston Stockwell will be developing this investigation further with component generously supplied by *Technocycle* [www.technocycle.com](http://www.technocycle.com) The materials will be returned to the company to be recycled after the exhibition. This is an important element in the large scale installations where she borrows materials to make the work. For example she made a body of work from toilet tissue (1990's)-sponsored by the Kimberly-Clark co-operation. The translucent floating sheets became light tunnels and huge ponderous stacks, alluding to monumentality and ancient civilisations, yet they were temporal and fragile, not easily recognisable as toilet tissue. She chooses these industrial and domestic 'commodity' materials because, in her words, they contain 'Stains of Existence' and 'act as ready-made signifiers' which she can sculpt and interweave in ways that delicately reveal their obscured politics and hidden beauty.

Accumulation, transformation, detritus, debris, everyday materials are all recurrent themes in Stockwell's work. Meticulously hand crafted, the benign sublime beauty in the work belies the devastating effects of our culture and our role in shaping it. Look more closely, and one is confronted by a cultural urgency of global-proportions. Political and cultural colonization, globalize waste and consumption are reconfigured by Stockwell's work into a new festering eco system of meaning that slowly seeps like the rising ocean level.

Stockwell exhibits in galleries and museums all over the world. She has had exhibitions at The Victoria and Albert Museum in London, The National Museum of China in Beijing and The Neuberger Museum of Art in America. She has taught extensively in Britain, America and Taiwan.