

Notes on Stele LXVII, Dogon

Much of my work uses suggestions gleaned from the artifacts of past civilizations to inform and give stability to the technology of fiber optics. Fiber optics are embedded in concrete and create patterns on the surface of the sculptures that change over time. This sculpture came about through several influences.

I had long been intrigued by primitive figurative sculpture and wanted to explore it, possibly with some reference dictated by Giacometti's work. At the same time I was interested in African tribal art and body markings and was particularly looking at the architecture and carvings of the Dogon people.

While I was working on the series of work that this piece belongs to, my wife and I often drove out the Long Island Expressway to visit friends. When we returned at night I always slowed down to watch, at risk of life and limb, a neon billboard for the Westinghouse Corporation. It was a simple statement but one that was rendered with great complexity. The sign consisted only of three w's but each stroke of each w and the circles that terminated them at the top were illuminated independently and created an amazing amount of rhythms and juxtapositions, so much so that you couldn't predict what the next pattern would be.

Stele LXVII, Dogon is the result of these influences that, perhaps, extends the life of each of them and offers meaning more relevant to the times we live in. Adding light and motion to a static, concrete form transforms each in an unexpected alchemy and results in work that more closely resembles life.

Clyde Lynds
October, 2012