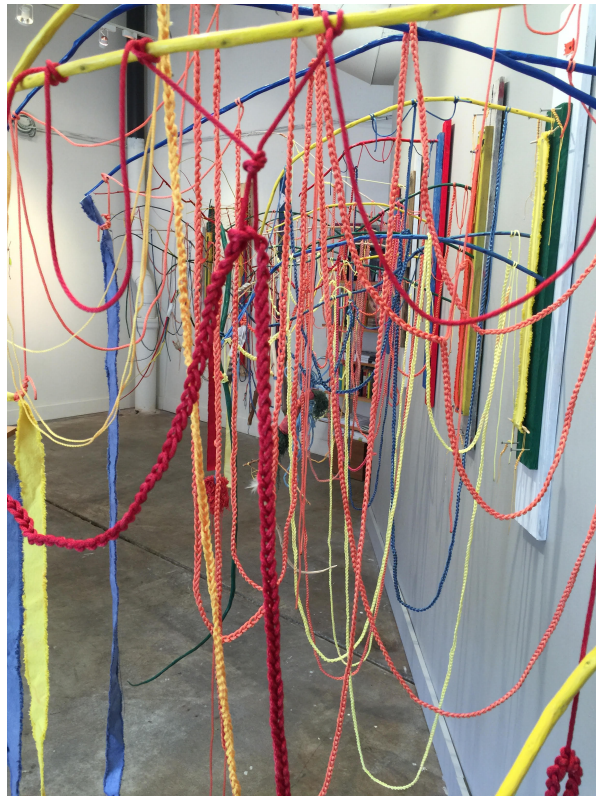


# A Knotty String of Life: Art Vandenberg at Poem 88

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Art Vandenberg, installation view of #Day 25000, create, record, reflect – Knot theory as a quantum string dynamic, on view at Poem 88 through July 14.

Art Vandenberg's combined fascination with mathematics and the art practice of indigenous cultures come together in the very short-run exhibition "#Day25,000" at Poem 88, which closes this Saturday, July 14. The seeming chaos of brightly colored boards, nails and knotted cords hung in parallel lines are in reality a completely logical shorthand for the days of Vandenberg's life as of the June 30 opening, his 25,000th day since emerging from the womb.

The exhibition could be approached by way of Vandenberg's utterly serious explication of how knots provided a way of recording information, including time, for the cultures of the Andes, where knotted cords were often combined with sticks, and how time itself derives from the knotty structures of spacetime and of the neural cliques with which we perceive it. Alternately, the viewer could pay attention to the things themselves, the tied bundles and bow structures and rows of tacks and nails that form Vandenberg's private symbolism based on a very public history of the meanings imposed on or found within knot tying.

Either way, the achievement is dazzling, and the knowledge that it is based on objects picked up along the way during what Vandenberg's calls his "walkabouts," his long-distance walks around Metro Atlanta, only magnifies the intensity of admiration. If there is a current debate about the difference between cultural hybridity and cultural appropriation, Vandenberg's oeuvre definitely falls into the category of integral hybridity; he has woven (or knotted) together so many visual and intellectual strands from so many different cultures that the outcome is a mythology (or a symbol set) of one, even as it reaches for universality in terms of what makes us human and what makes the universe itself what it is.



Art Vandenberg's installation *#Day 25000, create, record, reflect – Knot theory as a quantum string dynamic* is an accounting of the 25,000 days he'd been alive as of the show's opening.

The specifics of each piece relate to how, to the best of Vandenberg's recollection, the days of a particular year played out for him. The sheer variety indicates that he has had as richly complex a life as he has a career as incidental art maker—incidental because his day jobs in information technology have more often led in the direction of the dematerialized digital realm than into the depths of matter in all its sensuous variety as it appears in this show.

This exhibition is time-specific, and because of Poem 88's summer exhibition schedule, the time is short. Would-be viewers intrigued by the whole project might be further spurred by the knowledge that objects separate from the numbering of Vandenberg's days can be had here for as little as \$50.