

# Preview of Salesforce sculpture at Hosfelt Gallery

By **Sam Whiting** Updated 10:53 am, Friday, September 15, 2017

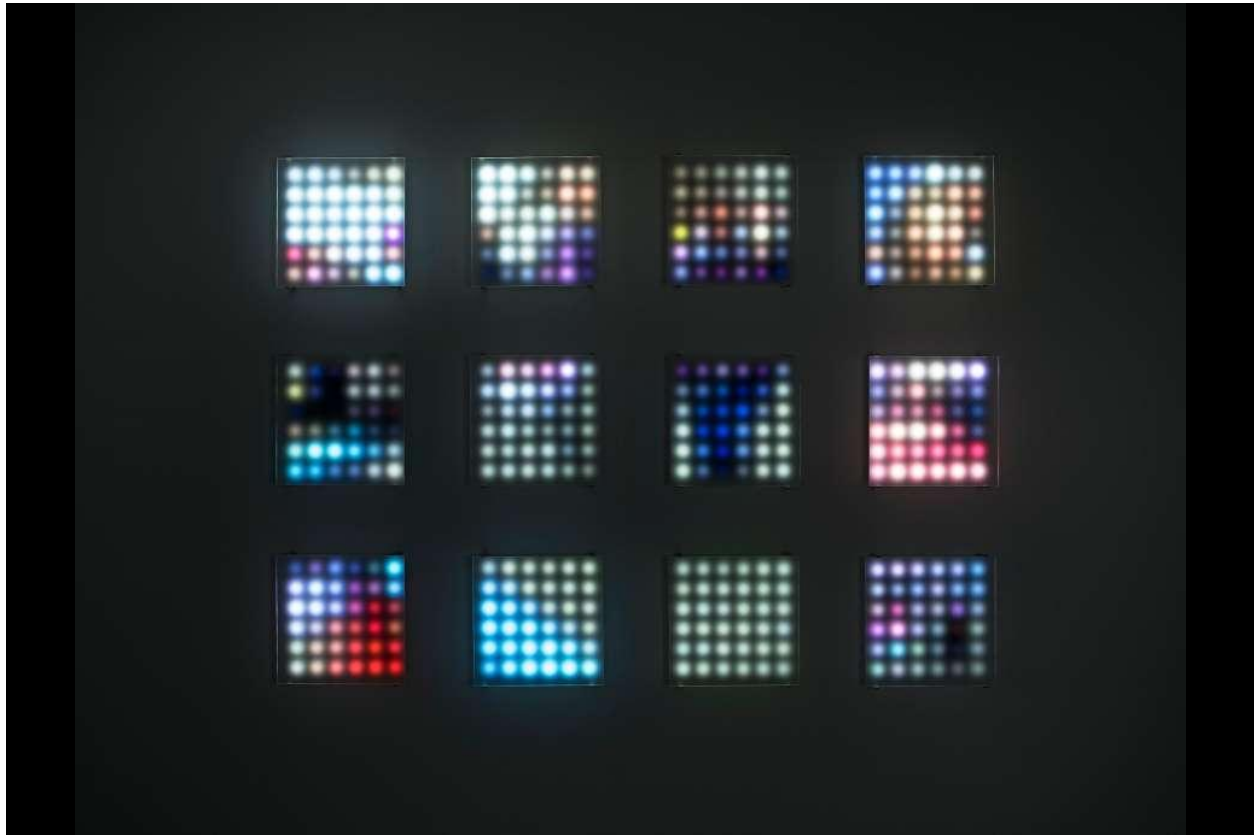



IMAGE 1 OF 52

"Scattered 12x (Women's March on Washington)," 2017 custom electronics, LEDs, treated Plexiglas 47 x 64 x 3 inches edition of 3; plus 1 AP



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The tallest piece of public art on Earth, a nine-story electronic sculpture in the round by Jim Campbell, is coming to the top of Salesforce Tower.

Its opening keeps getting delayed by construction, and it probably won't light up the sky until the end of the year, but anxious viewers can see it on a smaller — and closer — scale at Hosfelt Gallery.

“You can get the feel of the presentation that will be on Salesforce at the Hosfelt Gallery,” says Campbell, adding that one can also get a feel for how his art is assembled and how it works in a way that is nearly impossible once installed at Salesforce, where the work will be 61 stories up.

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The 10-by-20-foot work is called “Splitting the Crowd,” and it is the centerpiece of “Far Away Up Close,” a solo exhibition of Campbell’s mesmerizing video-based art that opened last weekend. The imagery in “Splitting the Crowd” is not a duplicate, because the Salesforce piece will use live pictures captured around the city each day for broadcast that same night, hence its name “Day for Night.” By contrast, “Splitting the Crowd” uses video that Campbell shot at the Women’s March in Washington in January.


But the technology is the same. Both works use high-definition digital video that is converted to low resolution to reflect an image off a building. Human figures can be

seen, but their movements are portrayed in an abstract sea of color, like they are moving through dense San Francisco fog.

At Hosfelt, you can stand at the back of the darkened room and make out the moving humans 80 feet away. Then you can walk toward the art and watch them become more abstract with each step. When you are close enough to touch the metal screen, the art is revealed to be three-dimensional. There are 700 LED lights, each mounted on its own little metal rod so that the light points toward the screen.

This is a hallmark of Campbell's art. Unlike most video displays, which point the light toward the viewer, Campbell's work points the light toward the screen, thereby softening the image.

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“You are not really seeing the image. You’re seeing a reflection of the image,” says gallery owner Todd Hosfelt, who has represented Campbell for 18 years — which is how long Campbell has been working in LED.

The 700 lights mounted on their little metal stands for “Splitting the Crowd” at Hosfelt Gallery will become 11,000 LED lights mounted on stands to surround Salesforce Tower. In either case, the MIT-educated Campbell has fabricated each and every light in his Dogpatch studio.

“What distinguishes him from anybody else making highly technical work is the fact that Jim is an engineer,” says Hosfelt. “He designs and builds all of his own electronics. It is both really high-tech and handmade.”

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**Far Away Up Close:** 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, 11-7 Thursday. Through Oct. 14. Hosfelt Gallery, 260 Utah St, S.F. (415) 495-5454.

**<http://hosfeltgallery.com>**