

“Crusts”

This represents something nothing else in the show does.

What’s that?

Food.

Two giant slices of bread, one atop the other, with a square-ish hole cut out of most of its central area.

What was taken away would be good to make a giant tea sandwich.

Being and nothingness.

How’s that?

The crust-shaped stuff exists, and in the hole there’s nothing.

Nothing?

Well, you could say that the hole is filled with air, which is made up of zillions of molecules.

Yes. Also dust and microbes and pollen.

But air is mostly invisible to us, so it looks like there’s nothing in the hole.

Invisible air is all around us. Does that mean we are surrounded by nothingness?

Perhaps better to say, nothing that requires our attention at this moment.

Zen masters advise us to empty our minds.

According to Ta Hui (1089-1163), “Buddha said, if you want to know the realm of buddhahood, you must make your mind as clear as empty space...”

Can you do that?

No. There’s always something buzzing around in my mind.

Same here.

Perhaps this sculpture represents Buddhahood.

Please explain.

The bread is the body and the material world, and the space within is emptied mind.

Hmm... I see also that the sculpture is entirely white.

Is it white or is it colorless?

What’s the difference?

Maybe there’s no difference objectively.

But subjectively?

If it was painted white, then that would be its color. If it's the stuff it was made of without any added coat of paint, then it seems colorless. Naked, you might say.

Unlike a classical nude in marble, which seems less naked than if it were naturalistically painted.

The form defined by light and shadow but without the full sensuous materiality of ordinarily real objects.

It seems to lack a dimension of reality. It seems slight unreal -- ethereal. A ghost.

What is a ghost?

A figment of your imagination that haunts your mind.

I think this sculpture will continue to haunt my mind.

Mine, too.



Nathaniel Robinson, "Crusts" (2018) fiberglass-reinforced gypsum cement and paint, 8" x 31" x 32"