

Giant moths at CU's ATLAS Center

By Yu Miao, For the Camera
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Photo by Mark Leffingwell

Artist Jen Lewin installs one of three moths on the ceiling in the Atlas Center on the University of Colorado campus in Boulder on Monday. "Moth," an interactive art installation, encourages people to interact with the sculpture.

Three giant moths will move into the University of Colorado's ATLAS Center on Tuesday.

The silk-and-metal robotic moths with 6- to 8-foot wingspans will be hung from the ceiling in the lobby of the Alliance for Technology, Learning and Society Center for a month. They are obedient -- only flipping their wings when visitors tell them to do so.

Viewers can interact with the moths by putting their hands on three orb devices on the floor. The moths will move according to the tempo of the touch, and the longer a visitor remains in contact with the orbs, the longer and more powerful the insects' movements become.

The exhibition is part of a series of ATLAS Institute programs organized by the Center for Arts, Media and Performance.

Rebekah West, director of the center, said the moths are "simple, beautiful and interactive."

"They evoke gentleness and human connection through technology," West said. "Technology has the capacity to bring us together, and this installation demonstrates this."

Boulder-based artist Jen Lewin, 33, is the creator of the moths. Her work has been shown throughout the country and South Korea.

If you go

Tuesday to Feb. 15: Interactive moth exhibition in the University of Colorado's ATLAS Center lobby from 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday. Free and open to the public.

Feb. 1: Artist Jen Lewin will speak as part of the ATLAS Distinguished Lecture Series from 3 to 4:30 p.m. in the building's Cofrin Auditorium, Room 100. Free and open to the public.

"Through my work, I play with the relationship between the physical and the digital, the virtual and the real," Lewin writes on her Web site, www.blueink.com. "In this interplay, the user and the piece participate in a unique 'moment' that is often unpredictable and spontaneous."

In 2005, the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art featured an interactive light curtain created by Lewin.