Art Analysis

The art piece that will be analyzed is “Across the Atlantic”, a visual art installation currently present in a room in the National Art Gallery of Canada. The installation consists of its components scattered about a room, while a video plays on a wide screen at the front. It was made to share the artist’s story of crossing the Atlantic Ocean to return to Canada.

The art installation consists of 5 hollow concrete balls scattered about a dark room on pedestals, and a video playing at the front. This video is mirrored horizontally across the center and depicts a variety of scenes from travel aboard a ship.

In the art installation, the concrete balls are arranged in an asymmetric manner, in contrast to the video playing, which is perfectly mirrored over the vertical central axis. However, should each sphere be considered individually, it can be said that they each have an infinite amount of symmetry axes. Each concrete ball is virtually identical to each other. While a proper measurement of mass could not be taken because it is forbidden to touch the art installation, it can be assumed that each sphere is very heavy.

Overall, the art installation had a very surreal atmosphere to it. This is largely due to the mirroring of the video otherwise depicting perfectly normal sea travel. Additionally, the concrete balls may also have a role to play in creating the abnormal atmosphere inside the exhibit. In everyday life, balls are generally present in a recreational setting. Concrete is instead seen in an industrial setting, and always embodying sharp geometries. The combination of a recreational shape and an industrial material is highly unusual, giving the audience a sense that things are not normal in the installation.