

ART IN NATURE – 2011

Artist Statements

Theresa Antonellis – Scrolls

The collection of five hand-made metal scrolls are arranged in a row of columns, referencing the trunks of the pine trees behind them, yet maintain the qualities of paper and knowledge. The scrolls form a long, undulating river way, signifying landmarks of human attainment among the changing but ever flowing path of knowledge. The tension between graceful curls and hard metal evokes a sly irony and understated humor. The ever-changing skin of rust is alive and yet stable and smooth, due to the original polished surface underneath.

Michele Koenig Augeri – Pollination

The forms I create are derived from shapes, patterns, and textures readily found in the natural world. The vessels of seeds, pods, and shells attract me. The interactions between two distinct materials tangled, bound or pinned together suggest a dialogue to me. My art forms depressions, undulations, spikes, obscured and revealed openings; and juxtapose dense intricate details with open spaces. It is integral to my values to use materials and processes that are less harmful to the environment, both in their application and their manufacture. This piece is intended to be a reflection on the cycle of pollination. The hollow chambers of the reeds are meant to attract local pollinators (especially mason bees) to deposit their eggs and the nectar they create from the pollen they collect within the sculpture. The piece is meant to be sited in an orchard, meadow, or garden setting where the efforts of the bees will increase the fruiting of the plants they visit. The motion of the bees may be seen as another aspect of the texture of the artwork.

Christopher Curtis – Luna's Disc

Luna's Disk was inspired by a 4,000 year old Bi Disk I saw at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1994. The object was perhaps 4" in diameter and was carved and finished meticulously in Jade. I made sketches of the piece and wondered for years how I could make a larger version and present it for outdoor viewing. When I hit upon the idea of creating a bronze shroud as a base, I thought the disc would be perfect elevated on edge above eye level. The shape of the piece references fertility, one of the most ancient themes in mankind's artistic expression.

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Peter Dellert – Evolution

My work concerns itself with the information both inherent and hidden in the iconic forms and the materials of our natural world. The sculptures speak of the fragility and strength in natural forms. It is this balance which I like to explore. The surfaces are muscular and male but the overall feeling of each piece is feminine. The work encloses space, encases it; yet does not own it outright. It is what remains hidden that seems to be stimulating our curiosity. The viewer begins to see that the mere outline of a piece or even its three dimensional presence does not totally describe it. We are left wondering about the interior of each piece. This constant inherent struggle of interiority and exteriority is what the work conveys. The correlation to the human condition is unspoken but overwhelmingly present.

Murray Dewart – Plains Pilgrim & Corragio III

I have been making sculpture for forty years and sometimes it seems like a parable about landscape where I'm following a plow toward a far horizon. The rolling terrain is American, the plow is my own, self-tooled invention. My granite and bronze gate-forms are sometimes functional, sometimes metaphoric. While I was born in Vermont, viewers often comment on the Asian sensibility they find in my work. Maybe it's the gesture to the landscape they see, my wish to make sculptures look at home in the natural world of gardens and in parks. Call it my quest for harmony, of both the inner and the outer kind. The titles *Plains Pilgrim* reflect my origins and my ancestors. The title *Corragio* comes from Isaiah....***Take courage!***

Alicia Dwyer – Dryad Grove

The eyes depict different tree spirits, ever watchful from their arbor dwelling.

Matt Johnson – The Scumble

I am interested in the furtherance of abstraction as it applies to randomness, spontaneity, and process (not unlike Nature itself) - as it is involved in the moment of thresholded physicalities and forces. There is a primal purity between the artist and his medium that transcends the dutifulness of day to day human interaction. It is the "Hope" of Fine Art. I explore these territories through reclaimed steel, mostly, as I find it the medium most challenging to manipulate. And out of that confrontation comes the aligning of one's consciousness with the perpetual present.

Tom Kellner – Double Negative

It is all about the life of the mind. Art is a verb as well as a noun. Sculpture is all around us: the branching of a tree; the accumulation of sediment bound up in the earth, then released as metamorphic rock; the pull of gravity; the structure and form we give to our perceptions, images and thoughts. Sculpture is matter becoming ideas. Perception shapes the image: what we seek is often what we find. Visual images are moments held, relationships bound,

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savoring, cherishing an instant. The transitions in my life inform my art as it evolves to reflect newer perspectives. Looking at art reveals the mind of another, becoming a visual conversation. In teaching, I integrate this process of searching, of finding a hint of the sacred in that which is commonly overlooked. Art is a tool for transformation, encapsulating reality in a frame of reference, or making the imaginary real.

Brian Leff - Balance Stick

To me, balance is the key to life. But finding your balance amongst the gravity our earth provides, does not just happen. We must work to find the balance. Our ecosystem has balanced itself over millions of years which has allowed us to evolve from simple cells, into simple organisms, into, eventually, the complex human beings that we are today. And now that I am here, balancing is what I decide to do. Balance has become what I am. I balance when I walk, I balance when I skateboard, but most importantly, I balance my life with the choices that are before me.

Eric Lintala – Shadow Dancers

Through observation, the sense of touch, moving through or around a site and with the unexpected interaction of light, sound and other natural phenomena all work together to create a unique experience with my sculpture. The sculptures I create have become a narrative of events in present time. The shapes and marks that I make, the symbols created, have become uniquely my own, they tell of my observations, experiences and events that have affected me.

Andy Moerlein – The Wave

The Wave is a necessary inversion of subsurface water: deep beneath erupts. Glacial erratics were wondered at and worshipped by early man. The impossible placement of scarred rounded stone in a mature forest, on a lakeshore, or mighty alone in a meadow, provoked sensations. Love can cause similar upheaval. Inert mass can become buoyant, effervescent, and preposterous.

Bayne Peterson – Farm Ship

Medieval bestiaries abounded in chimeras, recombinant creatures that expressed what was a thrilling, mysterious, world. Sharing this sense of wonder, I create similarly fantastical hybrids, such as *Yard Ship*, a mythical emissions-free land transportation device. Born of salvaged ship and tractor parts, cedar, and pine, this piece combines elements of earth and sea into a technological chimera.

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Gage Prentiss – Winter Totem 3

The themes of my work find their core in the many conflicts and harmonies found in duality. Life and death, the beautiful, the ugly, comfort and anxiety, the divine and mundane, they all embrace or battle in their search for balance. Each piece is a story taken out of context, born of a dream, and hammered into a half life for the viewer to explore and identify with. Though personal to me and predominately representative in form, their message and meaning speak differently to all who experience them. Anything a person experiences through their senses must ultimately be filtered through their own mind and emotions. With this simple yet profound fact in mind, I work to capture an idea, presence, and emotion as honestly as I can for *myself*. After I have reached a point where the object speaks to *me*, I can stand back and enjoy the many new lives, emotions, and stories the viewer brings to the object. The imagination inspired in others by my work is almost as fulfilling as their making. I hope that what I have made haunts and touches you as it has me.

Mark Schafer - Poetree: Recognitions

The sculptural installation “Poetree: Recognitions,” created to hang under the white mulberry tree in front of the Farmhouse, from its many branches, combines materials, movement, and text in an interactive piece that encourages viewers to join in a creative dialogue with the trees and landscape of Fruitlands and with words, specifically poetry. The installation takes as its text, “Recognitions,” a poem by U.S. Poet Laureate W. S. Merwin.

Jim Sheehan - Blue Eyes’ Ha-Ha, Hah

“Blue Eyes’ Ha-Ha, Hah” was developed specifically for the opportunity to present a large-scale, interactive work that could reflect an aspect of the historical scope of Fruitlands Museum. It’s a snapshot of the experience of New England’s early European settlers, who struggled to apply their inadequate skills and resources toward survival in a harsh new world. The story of “Blue Eyes’ Ha-Ha, Hah” is inspired, in part, by Nathaniel Philbrick’s book “Mayflower,” which cites the Fruitlands archive. This work is composed of three main elements, the sentinels, the Ha-Ha or earthen berm, and the garden.

Margot Stage – Pod Veils & Falling

One winter, fallen Black Locust pods caught my eye where they lay scattered on the snowy Littleton Common. Their twisted curves of deep brown were intriguing, no two quite alike. I collected bagfuls and eventually strung them together, then onto branches to create **Pod Veils**. Strips of fabric add another dimension, especially when the wind moves the pods and fabrics in different ways. This piece would be re-created on-site to hang from a series of branches in a specific location.

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Falling derived from the necessity of pruning a massive pussy-willow tree in my backyard. I loved the long, straight, skinny branches and left them leaning against the shed until I was inspired to attach them in a splayed arc of falling boughs. This piece would be installed by circling it around a tree trunk (or other vertical structure such as a lamp-post) and then letting it fall toward the ground.

Carolyn Wirth – Woman with Folded Arms

Wirth's work explores gestures in figurative sculpture, especially subtle acts that still retain emotional meaning. She documents the self as it experiences spiritual states that range from stasis to the sublime. The finished figures often give the impression that they are still in the process of being made, or else are on the verge of further decay, a continuum in the never-ending creation and alteration of an inner self.