

BRIDGETTE MAYER GALLERY



Pop Up Gallery Presents Abstract and Conceptual Art in Loveladies

By PAT JOHNSON | Jul 12, 2012

Photo by: Pat Johnson Artist Shelly Spector with her series 'Dreck Groove', computer generated fabrications that commemorate the natural and manmade disasters in 2011.



The big city has come to the shore for an enlightening vacation. For the second summer season, Michael Ryan Architects, in conjunction with Bridgette Mayer Gallery of Philadelphia, is offering a Summer Pop-Up Gallery at its office at 60 Long Beach Boulevard in Loveladies. Last year the work of renowned sculptor Mark Tobin was on display. This year the first exhibit, "New Paintings and Works on Paper," features the works of abstract and conceptual artists represented by Mayer.

At the artists' reception on June 30, conceptual artist Shelly Spector explained how she came to create commemorative plaques for a selection of disasters both naturally occurring and man-made.

"During the summer of 2011, my attention was focused on a series of extreme environmental events that began with the nuclear fallout in Japan and continued with an earthquake, tornados, hurricanes, floods and torrential rains. There seemed to be something every day," she said. In her series, "Dreck Groove," Spector chose to make art about the cause and effects of our consuming lifestyle on the natural world.

Spector is an artist-in-residence at Nextfab Studio in Philadelphia, a prototyping center where people bring their ideas and computer-guided machines create them from a host of materials: wood, Plexiglass and in Spector's case, wood and fabric. "I could learn on whatever machines I wanted. I chose the laser-cutting machine for the wood frames, and the digital sewing machine."

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The digital sewing machine is generally used for creating such things as corporate logos on shirts, said Spector. The flannel plaid fabrics she has chosen to embroider seem innocuous enough, unless you realize the titles reference the nuclear disaster in Japan. "I used the graph of the fallout pattern in Japan and Canada," she said.

The plaque "136" marks the hottest temperature ever recorded on the planet. Another plaque charts average temperature swings through history. And then there is the pretty "Blue Flood," perhaps warning us of an impending doom created by global warming.

Arden Bendler Browning is a Philadelphia artist who prefers to live in the city for the daily bombardment of visual images that she translates into intriguing paintings. "My images are derived from actual and virtual meanderings through fringe neighborhoods within Philadelphia," she explains. She likes to use Google Earth to zoom in and out of neighborhoods to capture fleeting images. "Roadblocks 2011" and "Parallels 2011" are small abstracts in gouache and crayon on rag paper. Browning also creates large murals on Tyvek paper, such as the one now hanging in Philadelphia International Airport.

Surf culture artist Julie Goldstein is well known on Long Beach Island. Her collection of various-sized woodcuts, snapshots of friends and ocean-related flotsam form a kind of summer-themed album. Goldstein is considered part of the California Mission School of graffiti and skateboard artists or street artists.

Tim McFarlane's "Cossia" and "Nosios" are abstracts that the artist built with layers of transparent and opaque color. The works "reference relationships between time, memory and movement," he said in his artist's statement. "The masses of forms overlapping, supporting and negating each other in my work mirror observations of everyday life; of how people interact with each other and their surroundings."

Kate Davis Caldwell's "Territory" is a beautiful screen of waving green and blues that works perfectly for the seashore aesthetic. This work is part of a series called "Flux." "From beginning to end, these works are in a constant state of wrestling with their final form," writes Caldwell. The paintings are initially covered in saturated color and the artist then carves out areas with a masking color, usually white. "This is an organic and intuitive process," she writes.

Mark Brosseau's brilliant, colorful abstract "Luxuries" speaks of the artist's enjoyment of putting color against color.

Rebecca Rutstein's "In White" is part of a series, "Inspired by space satellite technology and the rich imagery collected by the Mars rovers that have documented the topography of Mars since 2004, enabling us to lay eyes on an amazing and mysterious landscape." Her paintings are her own layered-landscapes of systems and forces reminiscent of genome structures.

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Nathan Pankratz' untitled collage in black, white and gray is part of a recent monochromatic series. "Large monochromes and blank pages acknowledge beginnings and remind us that for everything there is at the onset nothing," he writes.

Mayer also represents Ryan McGinness, a world-renowned artist working in contemporary media. His "Black Hole 48.3" is a silkscreen on a round wood form that is both jazzy and manic.

Conceptual artist Paul Oberst works in both three- and two-dimensions. His "Ceremonial Blanket/Red" consists of wire fence stretched on painted board, speckled with rosebuds. His "Temple Functionary" is a black and white male statue with no head but a handle. The two-dimensional part of his work is this conceptual artist's statement. Conceptual art needs the written statement to clue us into what the artist is trying to communicate. Oberst writes, "I am drawn to wiring objects together, actively tying together disparate elements that might have had a most casual relationship and tapping into the strings, fabric or lines that constitute (metaphorically, spiritually or physically) the infinite universe we inhabit."

In addition to the abstract and conceptual artists of "New Paintings and Works on Paper," look for "Jill Bonovitz, Works in Clay," in the Project Room. Bonovitz is the founder of the Clay Studio in Philadelphia and works in transparent porcelain. Her group of 32 bowls are decorated with tiny seeds or dashes of color. They seem to hold 32 tiny meals – meals that would feed a very tiny bird. "The drawings are not representative of anything," she said. She also offers a group of 37 small drawings on Mylar; one contains a Q-tip, another a cocoon. "I was having a good time," she said of these diminutive pieces.

Hours for the Summer Pop Up Gallery are Thursday, noon to 6 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; or by appointment by calling 609-548-2000.

<http://thesandpaper.villagesoup.com/ae/story/pop-up-gallery-presents-abstract-and-conceptual-art-in-loveladies/857435#>