

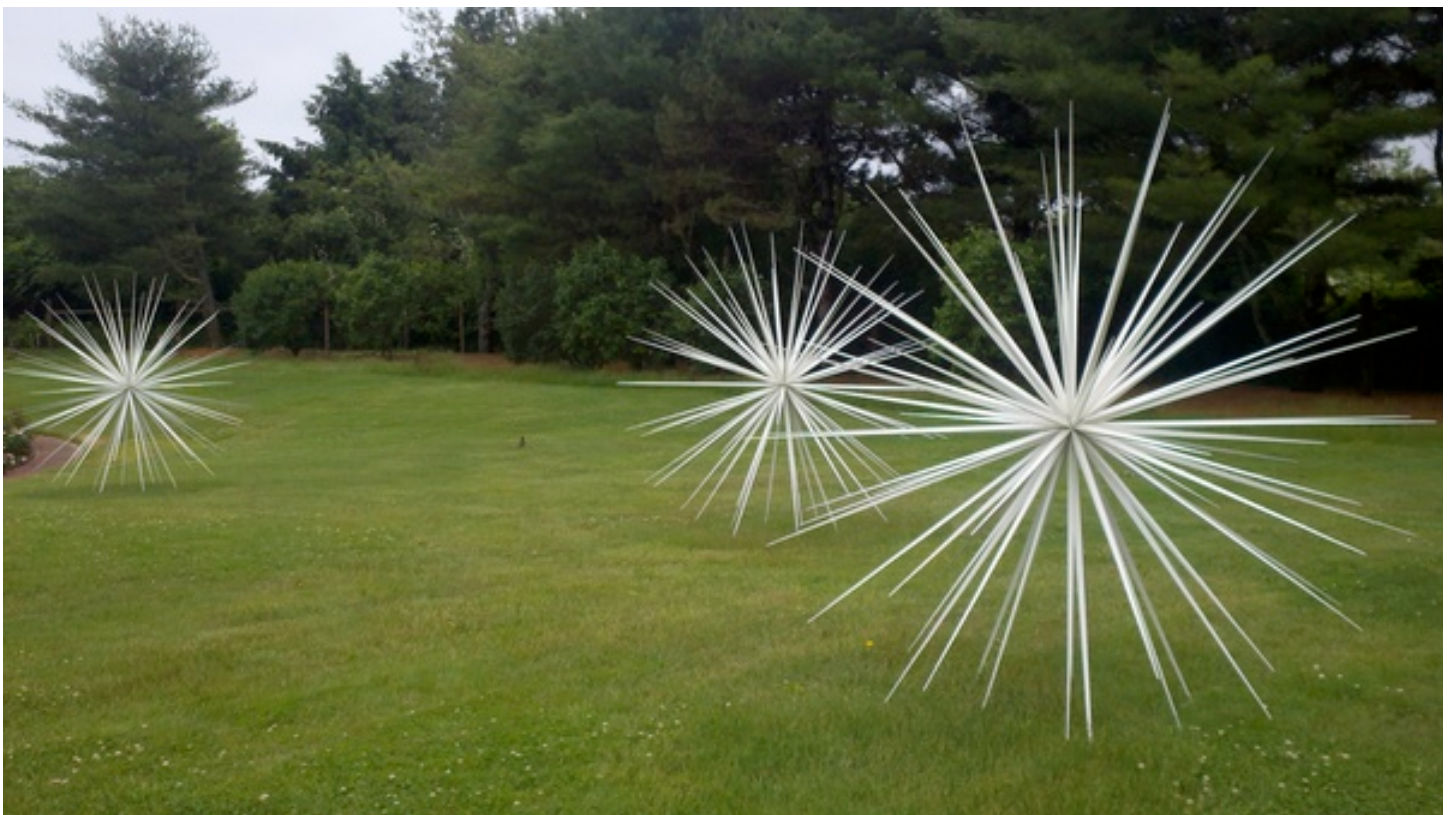
The Southampton Press

"Perspectives: Art is Everywhere"

By Eric Ernst

June 13, 2011

Perspectives: Art is Everywhere



"Windseeds" by Norman Mooney | Photo: Eric Ernst

Along with bad mannered weekenders clogging the roadways, the onset of the season also heralds a veritable plethora of art exhibitions. These exhibits can be found just about everywhere—whether in traditional spaces, such as the Crazy Monkey Gallery in Amagansett and the newly opened Halsey McKay Gallery in East Hampton, but also at even less conventional venues, such as the Bridge Gardens in Bridgehampton.

Originally founded in 2008 as a landscaped oasis featuring varied specimens of trees, hedgerow, flowers and herbs, Bridge Gardens has also, for the past two years, dotted the grounds with sculptures by contemporary artists. The purpose: further exploring the relationship between humankind and the natural world.



"Man" by Isobel Folb Sokolow | Photo: Eric Ernst



"INNER VIEW_Nexus-Interlocked"
by Caroline Ramersdorfer | Photo: Eric Ernst

"Uncommon Ground II", curated by Cheryl Sokolow of C Fine Art in New York, is now on view at Bridge Gardens.

The works are carefully placed within the 5 acres that encompass the gardens, underscoring and emphasizing the juxtaposition of both the organic and cultivated native plants and those objects that are man-made but which nevertheless seemingly appear as natural components in the landscape. This is particularly true of **Norman Mooney's "Windseeds"** (2010), which consists of three large white spike-laden objects that resemble giant dandelion puff seeds that have alighted in the cultivated meadow.

Isobel Folb Sokolow's "Man" (1977) seems to rise up from a grassy hill as if its jagged metal forms were being born from within the earth itself. Similarly, **James Demartis'** works, "**Willow**" and "**Twister**", make no effort to hide their industrial components yet their elegant use of an organic sense of motion creates a bond between elements of nature and the presence of the artist's hand in the manipulation of the object itself in the space around it.

Peter Rosenthal's "Hedge Your Bet" (2011), by contrast, uses entirely organic materials that are manipulated so that the presence of the human component itself is somewhat muted and the impact becomes a product of the interaction of the natural forms them-selves. Featuring wildly intertwined branches that snake sensuously through the hedgerow, the obviousness of the artist's intent is present, although it becomes a secondary element to the implied power and relentless energy of the environment itself.

Also featured in the exhibition at Bridge Gardens, which continues through the end of the summer, are **Alexander Krivosheiw, Caroline Ramersdorfer, Herbert Mehler, Zoetrope, Michael Enn Sirvet, Lila Katzen, John Van Alstine** and **Kevin Barrett**. The works will remain on view through the summer season.

At the recently inaugurated Halsey McKay Gallery, on the other hand, the emphasis is on the juxtaposition of construction in the work of Ruby Sky Stiler. But deconstruction is the primary element in the works on paper by Joseph Hart.

Interestingly, despite approaches that might otherwise seem a meeting of opposites, certain similarities nevertheless make themselves apparent, especially in considering Ms. Stiler's somewhat cubist-oriented wall reliefs. Basically, this rests within her reconfiguration of the surface image so that the first step to building the image itself requires it being dismantled and reconfigured.

Mr. Hart, on the other hand, seems to work from a perspective that a painting's impact is derived as much from what is hidden as what is revealed. Balancing areas of profound calm with splashes of color and calligraphic slashes that together orchestrate the picture plane, the pieces offer visual references that sometimes seem figurative while at other times are more subtle and abstract in the way Mr. Hart manipulates their placement and subjugates them to his dynamic use of positive and negative space.

The exhibition of works at Halsey McKay will be on view through July 4.

Lastly, at the Crazy Monkey Gallery is an exhibit that merits a mention here primarily by way of proving this particular writer's complete lack of professionalism. Featuring mixed media collaborations by Andrea McCafferty and Clare and Daniel Schoenheimer, I'd like to say that the highlight is a work featuring yours truly's smiling visage.

But the really powerful piece is one where the well-known and frighteningly impish sound engineer Glynn Wood glares at the viewer with a look of surprise and disapproval. That work is due to be placed on permanent display across the street in the ladies bathroom at the Stephen Talkhouse. The group exhibit at Crazy Monkey will be on view through Monday, June 27.

Eric Ernst is an artist who lives in Sag Harbor.

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