

Durham Arts Council in Durham, NC, Offers Exhibition Where Materials & Process Drive the Art

The Durham Arts Council in Durham, NC, will present *Material/Process*, featuring works by Gibby Waitzkin, Reni Gower, Jackie MacLeod, Holden Richards, and Deborah Kruger, on view in the Allenton and Semans Galleries, from Nov. 8 through Jan. 3, 2020. Receptions will be held on Nov. 15, from 6-8pm and Dec. 20, from 6-8pm.

The exhibition titled *Material/Process* features five artists whose artwork entails a complex use of various materials and a focus on how they are making their work as essential ingredients of their art process. The artists are Gibby Waitzkin (handmade paper and natural fibers), Reni Gower (intricate hand cut paper), Jackie MacLeod (rubbed, patinaed and sewn metal), Holden Richards (kallitype and silver gelatin photos) and Deborah Kruger (silk-screen on fused plastic bags). All of the artists have a keen sense of design, environmental awareness and time consuming process that makes their work distinctive.

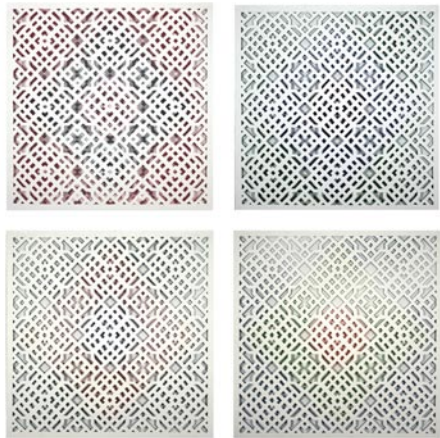


Work by Gibby Waitzkin

The natural world is the driving force in Gibby Waitzkin's work. Seeds, plants, and natural fibers strongly inform her art. She incorporates pulp painting with fibers using natural dyes (including indigo, osage, walnut, and cochineal); she also creates tones from the actual fibers, cooked at the height of their chlorophyll, to achieve a range of greens and yellows. Recent experiments with eco-prints (a type of dye transfer from the plants themselves) has added another visual element to her pieces. Using contemporary technology – digital archival pigment prints on acid-free handmade paper – is a critical element of the work. In a time where technologies tends to steal away from nature, Waitzkin uses it to draw the viewer back in and highlight the importance of the role of nature.

Waitzkin is a fiber artist, papermaker and photographer. Her education and training focused on photography, printmaking, and arts education. Her early involvement with political activism in the 60's centered around civil rights and environmental issues. She lived in Washington, DC and worked for over thirty-five years using her arts and design background on environmental, women's rights and arts issues. Waitzkin also founded Gibson Creative, an award-winning design and communications studio in Washington, DC. Waitzkin's work included campaigns for the World Wildlife Fund's Climate Campaign; Gore for President 2000 identity, Pew Center on Climate Change. She is committed to living a life built around an environment that is conducive to both physical and spiritual health.

Reni Gower's artwork recognizes geometric perfection as the matrix of the cosmos. Since ancient times, perfect forms (circle, square, triangle) have been thought to convey sacred and universal truths by reflecting the fractal interconnections of the natural world. One finds these similarities embedded in decorative patterns of diverse cultures around the globe. Incorporating these designs into contemporary artwork promotes tolerance through a shared perspective. Historically, Islamic artists appropriated elements from the classical traditions of Ancient Greece, Rome, and Persia to create a new decorative style based upon geometry. Through ongoing migrations, comparable interlaced motifs and meanings are also found in Celtic designs. Likewise,



Work by Reni Gower

Gower creates patterns inspired by Islamic tile work and Celtic knots. Cut by hand, her slow meticulous process is meditative and prayer-like for both the maker and the viewer.

In 2017, Gower received SECAC's Award for Outstanding Artistic Achievement. In 2014, she received the College Art Association's Distinguished Teacher of Art Award, as well as distinguished teaching awards from Virginia Commonwealth University and VCUarts. Her art work is represented in many prestigious collections and has been exhibited at international and national venues for over 40 years. After 37 years, Professor Emerita Gower retired from Virginia Commonwealth University in December 2018. She is the Chief Curator of Wylie Contemporary, Inc. Gower holds a MFA from Syracuse University, a MA from University of Minnesota-Duluth, and a BS with honors from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.




Work by Jackie MacLeod

Jackie MacLeod is a metal artist who uses steel, bronze, brass, and copper to create large-scale wall hangings, installations, and paintings on metal surfaces. Her current work explores patinas. These thin layers of color develop over time on metal after it is exposed to heat or air. This aging process adds interest and character to an otherwise beautiful but unexceptional metal. Jackie accelerates this process by mixing natural and man-made patinas, striving to create the sense of breathtaking imperfection and random beauty that is so awe inspiring in nature. MacLeod's art is inspired by what she sees around her. In some pieces, a variety and diversity in design and techniques leads to one cohesive and engaging work. Others are a single piece that has been treated over and over, with a multitude of techniques until it feels just right. Rather than seeing these differences as dividing, we can embrace our uniqueness and recognize that we are more beautiful when combining our variations.

Over the past decade MacLeod has played an integral role in the growth of Durham's visual arts community. She served as Board President of the Liberty Arts Board and co-chair of the *Bull City Sculpture Show*, which Liberty Arts sponsored. MacLeod is an accomplished designer and sculptor creating architectural metalwork and sculpture in a variety of metals. The three part circular concrete/metal bench as well as the handrails and arch in Durham Central Park are examples of her local work.

Historical process is a natural outgrowth of making large negatives. Holden Richards

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Work by Holden Richards

has recently combined displays of Silver Gelatin images with those that are Kallitypes, Salt Prints, and Cyanotypes. The combination of images is quite illustrative of the feeling a process can convey upon an image to the viewer. Historical process was typically done using a dim room for prep and exposing in sunlight, whereas Silver Gelatin is a traditional wet darkroom process. Currently, Richards is using only large format cameras, mostly older than 100 years old, and contact printing the results in the traditional wet darkroom on select European papers, as well as making Kallitypes and other alternative prints.

Richards is a traditional large format film photographer. Inspired primarily by walking the creeks and rivers of Orange, and Durham Counties, these locations and subjects dominate his photographic work. He has studied view camera and alternative printing at Penland School of Crafts. Richards is a current Getty Images Contributor who has had his work featured print, including the Oxford American magazine as well as appearing in corporate advertising campaigns through Getty.

In order to address concerns about dramatically declining bird populations and the rapid loss of indigenous languages, Deborah Kruger create feathers from fused and sewn recycled plastic bags silk-screened with images of endangered birds and overprinted with text in endangered languages. The



Work by Deborah Kruger

feathers are used to build pieces that are densely layered reliefs. These worldwide problems are having a profound impact on our culture and ecology.

Kruger has been working with fiber since studying textile design at Fashion Institute of Technology in New York. As a result, wallpaper design and patterning have always influence her work. Her art practice is a balance between making things of beauty and meaning.

Kruger maintains studios in Durham, NC, and Chapala, Mexico, where she creates her art with mixed fibers. Employing women from the local Mexican community to create the feathers using silk screening, a pre-technological technique (which she used extensively when she had first studied surface design) feels congruent with the consciousness Kruger is trying to cultivate.

The Durham Arts Council offers a rich array of classes for youth and adults in theatre, visual arts, dance, and music. They offer two floors of professional gallery space that are free and open to the public and sponsor arts in the schools serving over 28,000 children.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Council at 919/560-2719 or visit (www.durhamarts.org).

The deadline each month to submit articles, photos and ads is the 24th of the month prior to the next issue. This will be November 24th for the December 2019 issue and December 24th for the January 2020 issue. After that, it's too late unless your exhibit runs into the next month. But don't wait for the last minute - send your info now. And where do you send that info? E-mail to (info@carolinaarts.com).



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