

FlinnGallery

G R E E N W I C H L I B R A R Y

Of Art and Craft

October 26-December 6

Art, Craft or Magic? The Flinn Gallery at Greenwich Library invites you to decide for yourself by visiting the show *Of Art and Craft* from October 26-December 6. Nine artists will display creations of glass, clay and fiber, substances traditionally considered “craft materials,” but worked with such talent, imagination, and skill that the resulting pieces are unquestionably works of art. The show features glass works by **Kathleen Mulcahy**, **Josh Simpson**, and **Adam Waimon**; clay sculptures from **Jocelyn Braxton Armstrong**, **Susan Eisen**, and **Phyllis Kudder Sullivan**, and fiber explorations by **Emily Barletta**, **Norma Minkowitz**, and **Ellen Schiffman**. All contribute to the rich variety represented in this exhibit as the artists perform a transformation and create memorable, eye-catching pieces.

For Pennsylvanian **Kathleen Mulcahy**, growing up in her father’s toy store provided early imaginative stimulation. Now nature inspires the way she “teases” molten glass into delicate drops forming evocative pools of light that stimulate viewers to use memory and connections to reflect on the surrounding world. Cosmology, physics, chemistry, and mechanics fascinate Massachusetts based **Josh Simpson**, and led him “to translate some of the wonder of the universe into my glass.” Recognizing its unique properties of luminescence, color, and fluidity, he acknowledges “it is simultaneously one of the most rewarding and frustrating materials for an artist to work with.” Its nature forces compromise between the flowing liquid and the creator’s idea. Monochromatic, transparent, nature inspired forms are the signature of **Adam Waimon**’s glass sculptures. After the material cools, the piece is carved then sandblasted. This labor intensive process allows the artist to create intricate details and textured surfaces on “strong, elegant forms” that refract and transmit light.

Clay acts as the creative medium for Connecticut’s **Jocelyn Braxton Armstrong** whose earlier career as a fashion photographer led her to focus on gesture and form as essential elements of artistic expression. Her signature black and white porcelain pieces are thrown, cut apart and reassembled using black slip, giving them a fresh, modern sophistication. She says of this series, “I am the daughter of a fashion designer and the influence of sewing and patternmaking is evident.” She is also inspired by contemporary issues, as seen in her installation piece composed of hundreds of hand-built porcelain wings.” The natural world’s layers of relationships” provide the impetus for **Susan**

Eisen's works. Her hand-built works are layered and shaped by pinching and paddling "to expose interiors allowing light to pass through them." By incorporating pigments and diverse materials, she achieves texture that juxtaposes old and new and expresses her "sense of reverence for life's extraordinary wonder and beauty." Employing her unique technique of interlacing clay coils, **Phyllis Kudder Sullivan** creates energized inner space made visible through an open grid. The idea of enclosing and exposing space has its roots in both architecture and weaving. The resulting vessel melds the disparate elements of containment and exposure.

Fiber as a creative form dates back to prehistory yet it remains vigorous as a modern means of expression. Brooklyn-based **Emily Barletta** embroiders glorious designs on paper in which there is "the constant push and pull of light and dark, the violence that exists in the natural world, and the uncontrollable affects on the psyche when faced with the necessity to survive." The sewing skills she learned as a child aid her in recording the trials of day to day living where "each stitch becomes a mark focusing in on one small moment." The fiber sculptures of Westport's **Norma Minkowitz** demonstrate her commitment to the possibilities of crocheted forms stiffened into hard, mesh-like structures that suggest themes of enclosure. Their complexity offers worlds within worlds. **Ellen Schiffman** uses the "colors, textures, movement and moods of the natural world as a springboard for her creations." She often defers to the inherent characteristics of the materials she employs, making her work "a metaphor for the unexpected challenges of life." By selecting humble items like Q-tips or cosmetic pads, she applies talent and vision to transform them.

This group of nine artists perform aesthetic alchemy on glass, clay and fiber that elevates their results to a sphere beyond the ordinary. Leslee Asch and Barbara Richards are the curators of "Of Art and Craft" which opens at the Flinn Gallery on the second floor of the Greenwich Library with a reception from 6-8 on October 26 and runs until December 6. The works are for sale. The Gallery is sponsored by the Friends of the Greenwich Library and is open daily Mon.- Sat. 10-5, Thurs. until 8, and Sun. 1-5.

There will be an artist talk on Sunday, November 5th at 2pm.

A one-day affordable craft sale of items priced below \$300 is planned for Saturday, November 18th from 10am – 4 pm.

The "double feature" Friday film *Cameraperson* is scheduled for Friday, October 27th.