

WordPlay: Messages in Branches & Bark

FlinnGallery

GREENWICH LIBRARY

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For Immediate Release

WordPlay: Messages in Branches & Bark, March 30 to May 10, 2023

The Flinn Gallery in collaboration with browngrotta arts of Wilton, CT is pleased to present ***WordPlay: Messages in Branches & Bark***. The exhibition features the work of two internationally renowned artists, **Gyöngy Laky** and **John McQueen**, and runs from March 30 to May 10. Both artists use materials found in nature in combination with unexpected man-made elements to create baskets and other recognizable forms, such as words, symbols, books, and animal and human figures. The exhibition was planned to coincide with Earth Day, since Laky and McQueen are deeply concerned with the state of the world - environmentally, politically, and socially. It is accessible for people of all ages and will include hands-on activities for children, such as a materials' touch box, "I Spy", and word search puzzles for various skill levels.

Textile artist and sculptor **Gyöngy Laky** (b. 1944) has been described as a "wood whisperer." Her highly individual, puzzle-like assemblages of wood and found objects have helped to propel the growth of the modern fiber-arts movement. Laky is known for contemporary basketmaking, large, 3-dimensional letters, words, and symbols, and indoor and outdoor installations. She uses organic materials like apple branches and orchard trimmings and combines them with manufactured materials, such as screws, wire, zip-ties, golf tees, toothpicks, and coffee stirrers. Laky considers herself an "artist participant" and comments upon environmental and political issues that are of concern to her.

Sculptor **John McQueen** (b. 1943) uses willow, bamboo, birch bark, and waxed string to create life-like animal and human images, and objects such as baskets and books that incorporate woven text. Nearly all of his works employ traditional basketmaking techniques, which he learned at Pueblo reservations in New Mexico in the 1970s. Some of McQueen's sculptures and wall art images include flattened and cut pieces of plastic bottles, which he uses to comment on the relationship between the natural and man-made world. All of the letters and symbols in his books, baskets, and wall text pieces form words and messages, some obvious and others that lead to "ah-ha" moments when properly deciphered.

WordPlay: Messages in Branches & Bark will include more than 50 sculptures by these two innovative artists. The work is both beautiful and intriguing, as it invites viewers to decipher words and meanings and examine how the pieces were assembled and constructed. There are elements of wit, whimsy, and fantasy in many of the pieces, leaving visitors both amazed and amused. All of the works on display are for sale and the proceeds go to the Friends of the Greenwich Library to support public programming for patrons of all ages.

The Opening Reception will be held on Thursday, March 30 from 6 - 8 pm.

Events:

In addition to the opening, there are three events planned in conjunction with the exhibition.

Tom Grotta, Curator-Led Exhibition Tour

Saturday, April 15, 2 pm, Flinn Gallery

Gyöngy Laky, Online Artist Talk

Thursday, April 20, 7 pm

John McQueen, Artist Talk

Sunday, April 30, 2 pm, Flinn Gallery

Additional children's programs will be offered through the Greenwich Library. For details, please visit www.greenwichlibrary.org/children.

Flinn Gallery hours are Monday-Saturday 10-5, Thursdays 10-8, and Sundays 1-5.

For more information, please visit www.flinngallery.com or email info@flinngallery.com. To schedule a private tour with Flinn Co-Curators Debra Fram and Nancy Heller, please email gallerymanager@flinngallery.com or call (203) 622-7947.