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Look! It's Libby and Roberta

Sunday, February 11, 2007

A whole lot of artists at Woodmere

Post by libby



Alexis Granwell's *Going to Pieces Without Falling Apart*

There's enough critical mass at the [Woodmere Art Museum](#) to pull a devoted sidewalk stomper to the almost-burbs of Chestnut Hill.

What got me out there first of all was the Emerging Artists Series show, in conjunction with the [Center for Emerging Visual Artists](#), with works from [Christopher Hartshorne](#) and [Hiro Sakaguchi](#).

But the surprise for me was the excellence of the 67th Annual Juried Exhibition, with 68 pieces in the show (67 plus one for good luck?). Juried by installation artist [Polly Apfelbaum](#), the show skews contemporary, and the quality is uniformly high. Even the few genre paintings--still lifes, landscapes--had something juicy about them that made them worth a second look.



Two Places for Contemplating the Afterlife, by Michael Grothusen. The places marked on these maps are Niagara Falls, Krackow and Oswici

Emerging artist [Alexis Granwell](#), who just had an exhibit at [Tower Gallery](#), is on the cutting edge with a wonderful spiderweb of cut-out fabric, "Going to Pieces Without Falling Apart." The work immediately brought to mind the freeform lacy cutouts of [Dee Nicholas](#) and [Jina Valentine](#) (Jina's now up at [Fleisher-Ollman](#), and Dee Nicholas I've seen



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at [Seraphin](#)). At the other end of cut-out shapes, [Gallery Joe](#) artist **Michael Grothusen's** metal jigsaw maps contemplate the precariousness of life on earth.



Julian, by William G. Teodecki

Even the most old-fashioned pieces offered pleasures, like **Izzie Barth's** N.Y. Shipyard II pointillist watercolor, **William G. Teodecki's** Julian, an outsider-y portrait of a boy.

From Woodmere's curator-in-chief **Doug Paschall**, I learned that this year's show submissions were more adventurous than usual. He credited a switch to slides and jpgs for jurying (previously, artists had to deliver the originals), which drew in artists from a wider geographical area and more students than in the past. He said there was a wider range of styles, types, range of experience and age in the 450 submissions.



Bird Versions #1, by Gwen Maleson, has an ideosyncratic eco farmland look that subverts the grid into something more quilt-like

In a funny coincidence, showing in both exhibits is **Gwen Maleson**. Maleson, who shows at Rosenfeld Gallery, also is one of the 35 artists included in the show of work by Hiro Sakaguchi in his show with Christopher Hartshorne.

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Nami Yamamoto's contribution included some writing in Japanese, which of course works best in the vertical writing spaces the notebook provides. Yamamoto also included the temperature on the day she recorded this.

Here's how that happened. Sakaguchi created a group Picture Journal, with 35 artists contributing. The picture journal is based on a typical Japanese school children's summer vacation project, the journal a specific format with a place on each page for a picture, for words, and for the day's weather. The friends-of-Hiro resulting display is pensive and exuberant and wonderful.



Over Clouds (From the Travelers Tale series), 51 x 66", shows Sakaguchi balancing on the edge of a jet wing.

As a fan of so many of the artists included, I found myself poring over the images, guessing who did what. Included are some faves like **Rob Matthews, Nami Yamamoto, Russell Sellers, Mark Shetabi**--in short, too many to name.

Some of Sakaguchi's acrylic paintings --poetic expressions of sadness and fear of the loss of his native country, Japan--and his miniature cellphone paintings I have seen before. But I think Woodmere brings in an audience that rarely makes it to the city's galleries, and for them the work will be fresh as paint.



Girl Ignoring Stress, by Christopher Hartshorne

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Hartshorne's linocut prints focus on people and their relationships. My favorite, Girl Ignoring Stress, shows a girl ignoring a red snake weaving back and forth across her face. The acid-yellow background flecked with black only ups the pressure. I also liked his scroll like Drama, Part 1, with its figures reacting to each other across time and the horizontal space.

More pictures from both shows are on my [Flickr set](#).

Posted by libby at 6:40 PM

Labels: alexis granwell, christopher hartshorne, gwen maleson, hiro sakaguchi, michael grothusen, nami yamamoto, william g. teodecki, woodmere art museum

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