

## *Art on the Gwynns Falls Trail*

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# 5<sup>TH</sup> ART ON THE GWYNNNS FALLS TRAIL SELF-GUIDE BROCHURE

## *Wild/Tamed*



# THE EXHIBIT

Welcome to Baltimore's unique Art on the Gwynns Falls Trail environmental art exhibit where you can follow the artists' thoughts about their relationship to our environment and their inspirations. The artists created their works with man-made and natural materials and chose a setting here which enhances their statement. In this evolving art form, the artists invite us to participate in a dialogue outside the formal walls of a museum or gallery. They awaken us to our own paths of observation and ideas.

This year's artists have been asked to explore the concept of *Wild/Tamed* by creating visual metaphors based on such themes as time, transformation, travel and opposites. Materials carelessly discarded and creatively reused open our eyes to the human potential of creativity, inspiration, playfulness, and destruction. The untamable power of water may lead to the creative reorganization of contemplatively arranged materials found near a stream. Blue bags and CDs littering our lives guide us 'off the beaten path' into the quiet. There we listen to the rustle of windblown bags and find silently spinning, glittering CDs reflecting us and on us within the natural wilderness around us.

We always lose, but as we reflect on the past and the power of water as our lifeline, we have an opportunity to gain. Re-forming found and discarded objects playfully suggest the many options we have. The artist's works are designed to change, dissolve, and interact with the natural environment. Is our stream of thought changing while we explore the art in this setting and and while we learn to see and listen to our inner dialogue with the artists?

Enjoy your discoveries! Take time at our interactive stations to be creative; contribute to a common piece, or create something you can take with you. Be inspired and look at your environment in a new way. Enjoy the music in the open air or listen to the tunes of nature. Discover history and natural beauty on your stroll or ride along the Gwynns Falls Trail and plan to come back again.

nails and screws

"For me running is meditative yet exploratory as I am always attracted to the periphery of towns and cities. Places where nature and people meld together and also break apart comfort me and offer the best findings. When running my eyes continually search and it amazes me when I happen upon a stack of discarded old wooden windows. I can't help myself. I have to stop. With their wavy panes of glass filling up with rainwater, their patina carrying a certain topographical map, their paint layers worn by lifting hands and their musky smells all bring back memories of boyhood. The windows remain in my thoughts throughout the run until I return with my station wagon.

My paintings have a strong connection to the human condition within nature. My propensity to include architecture within the landscape is apparent in each work. I believe there is a deep relationship between natural form and human design as every one of the structures in my paintings pay close attention to the window. I see their inclusion as my Thoreauvian attempt to coexist with nature. In my most recent paintings I began to include tree houses. Elevation offers safety. An elevated structure is more attuned to boyhood memories, the way it becomes immersed in nature and, though perilous, a house in the tree remains meditative. I believe possibilities and contradictions should always exist together. Imagination is irrational and I have been obsessed with collecting windows ever since.

My desire for creating sculptural form, departing from painting, confronts my connectedness to nature through salvaging windows. This glass structure will hint at human complexity and contradiction that my compulsive running brings from the periphery of nature. The rescue of a perishing architecture is built into an elevated space and will hold both beautiful and frightening as it is offered back to nature in an obsessive circle."

## THE ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK

works in opposition to the weighty, solid metal. There is also the contrast inherent in creating environmental art out of materials slated to be destroyed—discarded metal and invasive weed trees. The altar shape was inspired by the tree's common name: Tree of Heaven. Tamed here as sculpture, the tree growing wild is also known as Stinking Sumac.”

### Work 14 – Inga West

**Inga West** comes from the Midwest and is a recent graduate of MICA with a major in fiber arts and a concentration in illustration. “ Working with the ancient process of spinning wool on a drop spindle has proven to be meditative and inspirational to me. Creating art with nature allows me to put a human touch to the environment without being invasive or destructive.”

*Trial Triad* - Materials: Hand spun wool and flax  
“The yarn is spun from raw wool on a drop spindle. It is in various textures and widths, but is one continuous line wrapped around branches and vines coming off the tree and creating a three dimensional space.”

### Work 15 – Robert Jones

**Robert Jones** received his MFA from Maryland Institute College of Art in 2005. He held the position of Artist in Residence at three museums. From 1998-2001, he was the Director of the Commencement Art Gallery in Tacoma, Washington and taught Life Drawing and Life Painting at Tacoma Community College. Robert painted murals for both the Washington State History Museum and the Museum of Flight. He was a Fulbright finalist in 2005. Currently, he teaches Painting and Printmaking at Towson University.

*Tree House* - Materials: Found wood windows and doors,

### Work 1– William Friebele

**William Friebele** has a B. A. degree in philosophy and is working on his MA degree of Fine Arts at the MICA. He has worked as a visual arts teacher, art director, mural designer, and outdoor sculptor at various locations in Maryland since the year 2000.

*Space Invader* - Materials: Wood, dowels, cord, and eyelet screws  
“I am interested in how forms that surrounded us have a visceral affect on our thoughts, emotions and physical sensations. I am trying to raise awareness of the body in space and examine our relationship with the immediate environment, the crevices and vacuous spaces in which we live and seek refuge, and the substantially more complex public realm, which we navigate. It is in the open spaces, created for public assembly where we discover a confluence of disparate cultures, influences and personalities. Spontaneous interactions and chance encounters are made possible by the emptiness within the form of public space. Perhaps more than in private space, these places reveal value systems subsumed in physical form. I am interested in exposing how all the spaces that we create and inhabit reveal fundamental assumptions about our environment and ourselves.”

### Work 2 – Julia Kim Smith David Beaudouin

**Julia Kim Smith** received her MFA from University of Michigan Ann Arbor, where she was the recipient of a Rackham Fellowship. She has served as adjunct faculty member at MICA and as senior designer at WETA in Washington, DC. Julia has received numerous Art Directors Club awards. Her shows include Creative Alliance at The Patterson, Baltimore, MD; White Box's Video Box in New York, NY; Los Angeles Center for Digital Art; Long Beach Island National Juried Exhibition; and School 33 Juried Exhibition, Baltimore, MD. She is presently one of nine artists selected for Maryland Art Place's 20th Annual Critics Residency Program and Exhibition. She is working on "Anonymous Rage: Baltimore," a series for Maryland Art Place.

**David Beaudouin**, a native of Baltimore, is deeply involved in the city's writing and performance scene. In 1976, he founded Tropos Press, Inc.,

the respected alternative literary press. He is also the co-founder and editor of *The Pearl*, Baltimore's oldest journal of the literary and "spontaneous" arts. During the past five years, he has worked with the visual artist Julia Kim Smith on a series of transmedia collaborations that fuse word and image, including *Ever After: Assemblies for Tales and Scrolls (How Do I Become)*. David's interests also extend to film. In 2002, the Maryland Film Festival screened *Fluid Movement*, a documentary short that he co-produced with Beth Pacunas. In 2005 he collaborated with Julia Kim Smith and Francesca Danieli on *One Nice Thing*, a video installation and documentary.

***Words on Water: A Conversation between Past and Present*** - Materials: Vinyl, ink, and metal stakes

"The human concept of Nature as a constant underscores our own inherent misunderstanding of its true dynamic and our willful ignorance of our dysfunctional relationship with that dynamic. As the ancient Greek historian Heraclitus wisely observed, nothing stands still; paradoxically, the only constant is change, a fact that human culture continues stubbornly to resist. This resistance is best revealed in our two hundred year-old War on Nature.

Excoriated by 'progress', polluted by neglect, the Gwynns Falls watershed and falls are a clear reflection of this conflict and its effects. What we have been left with is a drastically diminished and ravaged version of what was and what still could be. *Words on Water* seeks to evoke a dialog between the past and presence of this Place, to evoke what has been lost and what persists.

Drawing from various sources in local history, myth, environmental hydrology, and fluid dynamics, we employ text to build layers of context in 'voices' that surface and submerge, simulating the mechanics of water itself. This text will be displayed in sequential typographical clusters on a transparent film that will wind through the shallows of the Dead Run for roughly 20 feet.

By integrating a flowing, fragmentary text of dialog literally within the course of Dead Run 'babbling brook,' *Words on Water* seeks to create a new current of meaning that draws viewers in, asking them to acknowledge their relatedness to an Outside they cannot live without."

### **Work 3 – Nancy Freyman**

**Nancy Freyman** is a retired operating room nurse who has taken art classes for several years to enrich her life. She is very connected to and inspired by the natural environment of the outdoors. Nancy has become a master gardener who both maintains a city garden and works lovingly every week in

reference to our inability to truly control nature.

### **Work 12 – Laura Vernon-Russell (artist and photographer), Leslie Schwing (artist), Joan Bull (musician), Beverly Eisenberg (architect), Janet Young (scientist), Susan van Buren, Ruth Holly (educator), Kathryn Park.**

**Leslie Schwing** has exhibited her work nationally since 1976 in both solo and group shows using a variety of media. She studied painting, sculpture and jewelry making at Carnegie Mellon University, George Washington University and at MICA. Leslie drew 32 illustrations for the book *Ideas and their Expressions* and wrote a chapter in the book *Dreaming for Dummies*.

**Laura Vernon-Russell** graduated *cum laude* from MICA in 1981. She has exhibited her photography, painting, and sculptures in both group and solo exhibits in Maryland and Delaware.

***Stone Game*** - Materials: Stones, sticks, paint, and found materials

"The Stone Game, created in 1994 by Leslie Schwing and Janet Young, has been used in many ways, as an art installation (indoor and outdoor), as a team building exercise for boards and corporations, as an intellectual "sport" in academia, and as therapy tool. The game is an abstract art game of inquiry and dialogue. Posing a question or problem, prior to play, stones and natural objects are collected by the players and ritually arranged in combination with glyph marks. In an outdoor setting, the glyph marks can be drawn in the sand, dirt or arranged with sticks and twigs. The result, always an object of beauty, is also a relic of the query. Dialogue during and after the game increase the understanding of both question and possible answer that arise during the play. Nature "finishes" the game through the work of weather and circumstances.

The group has played the gentle game with dynamic results together for two years in various environs."

### **Work 13 – Ed Simmons**

Ed Simmons has been studying sculpture for the last several years, to find a balance with his work at the Social Security Administration. He is an active member of the Friends of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park and the Gwynns Falls Trail Council. Ed assists frequently and consistently with the maintenance of the Trail, Park and gardens.

***Sumac Altar*** – Materials: Found metal and ailanthus branches.

"The idea is a play of opposites like the show's title. The light, flexible wood

will they read metaphorically as sky as in a painting, or both?"

## Work 10 – Fred Merrill

**Fred Merrill** is a self-taught visionary artist, who never tires of creating imposing and playful wood creatures from scrap wood he finds at the company where he works. "Drawing and photography have been hobbies for over half my life and the influences, among others, are nature, surrealism, monster movies and undersea life. The wood creatures idea started in 2000 after going to the Burning Man Art Fest in the desert in Nevada, where anything can happen. I thought to myself, I don't have the budget or time to do the enormous structures with leftovers from the furniture builder shop I deliver for. I saved up several hundred pounds of various pieces that seem organic, natural and even robotic in appearance and took it from there."

*Wooden Creature* - Materials: remnant wood, screws, nails and vines

## Work 11– C. Brooke Sturtevant-Sealover

Brooke graduated from MICA in 2001 with a degree in fine arts. She added a teaching degree to her accomplishments and now teaches art at her former high school in Hartford County. It was Brooke in her senior year at MICA who suggested creating and curating an art show along the Gwynns Falls Trail in Leakin Park. She has served on the exhibit committee ever since and has provided advice, and the titles for our exhibits. This is Brooke's fourth entry in the Art on the Gwynns Falls Trail.

"After graduating from MICA in 2001 I have been creating temporary, site-specific sculptures for both gallery and outdoor settings. My work, which is conceptually based on the construction of nature's architecture, is built mainly from, natural and nontoxic materials. My work is very meditative and tedious. I tend to work on only one piece at a time shaping it from sometimes only one small branch into a much larger sculpture. The physical layout of the site will often mold the initial design idea into the final sculpture."

*Bird Cage* - Materials: tree branches, leaves, mud, wood, and glue

*Bird Cage* is a woven branch sculpture that looks like a well-trained topiary tree. The unnatural ornamental shape is symbolic of mankind's inclination towards making nature conform to our idea of what it should look like and do for us. The *Bird Cage*, which is incapable of containing a bird, is a

the Winans Meadow Trailhead gardens. She also volunteers at the Howard Rawlings Memorial Conservatory in Druid Hill Park

*Sanctuary* - Materials: Vines and twigs

## Work 4 – Laura Lynn Emberson Burns Schaeffer

**Laura Lynn Emberson** received her BFA degree from MICA in 1989. She works as a freelance artist in Baltimore specializing in murals. One can find her work in public schools and at private businesses. And is teaching a continuing studies painting course at MICA. "I have spent my life studying and creating art. Through formal training, extensive world travel and dedication to developing my skills, I have achieved many of my goals as an artist. Working as a muralist gives me the opportunity to expose my work to a larger public. My goal is to work with the public in creating murals that all might learn from and be encouraged by"

Burns Schaeffer started his art education at MICA and obtained a BFA degree from Eastern Kentucky University. He has exhibited his work from California to Kentucky and Ohio to New York. His work can be found in three collections.

*Transference Tradition* - Materials: Bamboo, twine, fabric, and stones

"Bamboo is woven together in a style fashioned after traditional Asian bamboo pedestrian bridges. Our intention is to create a symbolic bridge with the potential to function. The piece represents to us the passing of time in nature and in human life. When you think about our life (our lives) and the relatively short amount of time we have to experience it, always trying to build up our strength to withstand the weight of life itself, we do become transformed."

## Work 5 – Jude Asher

**Jude Asher** has drawn and painted passionately since childhood. As a young girl she took painting classes, as well as learning needle arts from the women in her family. . She began creating site-specific installations while living in South Carolina in the 1970s. She has been a painting student of Marguerite Burgess, attended Hofstra University and MICA, and has shown her work in many venues in South Carolina, Washington, DC, and Baltimore.

Residing in Baltimore since 1981, Ms. Asher is active in the in the Herring Run Artists Network. Her work can be seen at the Big Show at the /

Creative Alliance and the SOWEBO Festival poster show. Ms. Asher is an artist in the Art on the Trail show for the third time this year.

*Off the Beaten Path* - Materials: Used CDs, blue plastic bags and nylon filament.

“As in my work before, I am using “Throw Away” items in a way that both blends with yet still subtly disturbs the environment, without damaging it. I created an alternative path, leading off the main trail, lined with ubiquitous plastic bags attached to trees leading to an enchanted grove of hanging CDs. Their diffraction properties create rainbows as they spin gently, changing the light like a kaleidoscope. In photos of the post Katrina aftermath, that electric blue of plastic leaped out at every shot. I want to transform the mundane into something magical and slightly sinister at the same time.”

## Work 6 – Renee Tantillo

“Transmogrification of machination: Taken for granted, machines often are neglected, abused, used up for all of their worth, then tossed aside. Assume and consume. The very individual parts make up the machines around us, may as well be paper cups at the water fountain. The discarded deserve another chance. Formerly functional found objects constructed/composed into flowers from the fields where post-apocalyptic fauna roam; vessels of light from where cars dream. Insects live longer than we. Monsters commission trees. My intention is plain: Thwarting preconceived notions of the simple beauties of natural composition and from whence they come. They come from my mind, and a pile of scrap. Use it up, wear it out, and make it do.” Renee has shown her welded work over 12 times in shows and events since 1998.

*Kick Start of Summer* - Materials: Found/collected metal objects and vintage British motorcycle gear

“*Kick Start* materials were procured over the spring and summer months one year, then put together as a representation of that period. The flowers are made from automotive bell housing pulleys and vintage British motorcycle kick-start gears. The accompanying foliage was found in a surplus/scrap yard for oil field valves and hardware in Texas. All were brought together in one arrangement, shown at the height of growth; after the last spring showers, when everything really shoots up, you have...the start of summer.”

**Work 7 – William Friebele** - See work 1 for artist information.

*Ascension* - Materials: sisal string

## Work 8 – Connie Wheeler Stepanie Czyryca

*Connector* - Materials: corrugated plastic, clay, paint, straight pins, and organic materials from the site

What if every species on the planet used the same community planning methods and building materials humans use? An illustration using Franklinton Road, the Gwynns Falls Trail, the BGE underground gas lines and the city sewer lines as tangible examples of human building and movement in comparison with insects. Inspired by observing the energy efficiency of ants and bees.

## Work 9 – Laura Elkins

**Laura Elkins** is a painter in Washington, DC. A fundamental aspect of her work is exploring the nature of the painting support, addressing the relationship between content and support, as well as the relationship between the painting and the space surrounding it. In the art and architecture projects, such as *Cajun Christmas* and *What Madness* – both private homes as public art projects – the painting is integrated in the architecture. In the permanent work, such as *The Children's Room* the art and architecture are developed concurrently. The installation at Gwynns Falls Trail is the artist's first experiment with the relationship between painting and nature. *Cajun Christmas* is a painting designed as if the floodwaters of New Orleans had reached the artists home in Capitol Hill and is being sold by the square foot to benefit visual artists in Louisiana.

*Leaf Motif* - Materials: Acrylic and latex paint on Tyvek, staples, glue, and Velcro

“Normally we see leaves on trees against the sky, or on the ground: however these leaves will 'be' the sky-blue leaves and incorporate in silhouette imagery from my recent work. When we view paintings, we invariably read blue as sky. Even in abstract work. The color recedes and emulates that sense of expansion we feel when we see the real sky. Part of *Leaf Motif* is to experiment with this perception of blue outside as discrete painting in the natural setting of the Gwynns Falls Trail. Will the blue leaves read as bits of sky? If so, will they read literally as sky, at least at first, or at a distance, or