

CONSTANCE SALTONSTALL FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS

# Saltonstall The First 10 Years

A selection of 21 artists' work

CURATED BY ANDREA INSELMANN  
HERBERT F. JOHNSON MUSEUM OF ART, CORNELL UNIVERSITY

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# PREFACE

**2006 MARKS THE FIRST FULL TEN YEARS** of Constance Saltonstall's legacy to New York State artists and writers: establishing an arts foundation, the core of which is a stunning and serene artists' colony founded in her own contemporary home and studio on 200 acres of pastoral land near Ithaca, New York. The Saltonstall Foundation is most unusual in providing both artists' fellowships for summer residencies and unrestricted individual artist's grants as part of its main mission. Many of us on the working Board of the Foundation – all literary and visual artists – knew Connie Saltonstall. She was herself an accomplished photographer, painter and avid restorer of historic buildings. We are dedicated to sustaining and expanding on her generosity by focusing on the needs of individual artists in an era of shrinking support

Among many special events this year, we celebrate this summer exhibition at the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University as the first museum exhibit of Saltonstall Foundation visual artists as a group. We gratefully acknowledge the support and partnership of the Johnson Museum in sharing new work by a selection of “our” artists. We extend our special thanks to Frank Robinson, Director, who welcomed our proposal for our ten-year anniversary exhibition, and to Andrea Inselmann, the Museum's Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, for selecting the exhibit and writing the introductory essay for this catalog. The works of these twenty-one artists reflect her particular definition of the “contemporary artist” as expressed in her essay. While these are only a handful of those 266 New York State artists and writers who have received grants or held residencies at the Saltonstall Arts Colony over the last ten years, they pull us into the new century with them through their challenging work and engaging personal statements.

To our Program Director, Laurel Guy, we owe great thanks, not only for shepherding this show and our innovative catalogue in CD and printed formats, designed by Michael Rider, but also for her boundless energy in sharing our commitment to the working artist.

The word is out – the number and quality of artists applying to our programs keeps growing, our salons, seminars and workshops have expanded rapidly, and community response increases with each season. Established now, yet full of momentum, we envision many, many creative decades to come.

*MARILYN RIVCHIN President of the Board, Constance Saltonstall Foundation for the Arts*

# INTRODUCTION

**THE CONSTANCE SALTONSTALL FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS** residency and grant program for visual artists and writers celebrates its tenth anniversary this year. The Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University is delighted to organize and host the exhibition commemorating this occasion, representing yet another way the Johnson Museum is committed to supporting local and regional artists.

Considering that about 266 artists and writers have been able to take advantage of the Saltonstall Foundation program during its first ten years, the fact that 83 visual artists submitted work for inclusion in this juried exhibition represents an amazing percentage of participation. These figures testify to the artists' positive experiences in the program, which is widely known not only for its serene rural setting and stunning studio spaces but also for its delicious meals. Approximately 1,100 slides of work in all media were sent in, ranging from painting, photography, drawing, printmaking, installation, sculpture, and mixed media to digital work. Out of this huge and diverse pool of work I chose 21 artists, who are mostly represented by one work of art in the exhibition, except, when more than one piece was essential for the understanding of the artist's oeuvre. I not only attempted to pick a fair representation of the kind of work that is being produced in the Saltonstall artist colony I also wanted it to have some currency in the broader world of Contemporary art. Just because a painting, photograph, or sculpture was made yesterday does not mean that it automatically participates in contemporary discourse in a relevant way. Something has to happen within a work of art that can be communicated to an audience at this particular juncture in time; it has to be *of* and *for* this time.

The artists I chose for *Saltonstall: The First Ten Years* live up to this challenge. They reference different moments in the history of art, encompassing on the one hand Medieval manuscript painting and religious tableaux from the Renaissance, and Abstract Expressionism and geometric abstraction, Minimalism and Decoration, Arte Povera and Conceptualism on the other, addressing a broad range of topics relevant to contemporary culture. Many of them are concerned with a sense of place. For instance, **Sarah McCoubrey** has focused on the phenomenon of suburbia in small, meticulously painted landscapes, in which city dwelling and wilderness clash. No longer is the American experience about unspoiled vistas, like in American painting of the nineteenth century. Instead, power lines, billboards, and chain link fences dominate McCoubrey's paintings of dying trees and underbrush, signaling the interstitial space of suburbia. A similar experience of place is achieved in **Martin Kruck**'s digitally manipulated photograph from his *Xcapes* series, in which the viewer simultaneously experiences the landscape as nowhere and everywhere, enacted by a figure artificially placed into the site, questioning ideas of presence and place. *CONTINUED* ►

## INTRODUCTION

These notions are also engaged in **Mary Lum**'s cut paper collage, in which she examines complex conditions of simultaneity, addressing issues related to the relationship between place and memory, proposing that past, present, and future may be interchangeable. **Alison Slein**'s digitally manipulated photograph, on the other hand, seems to suggest that we are out of sync with the natural world. By photographing a miniature diorama in an outdoor setting, the artist blurs traditional boundaries between inside and outside, sculpture and photography. **Lisa Mordhorst** also utilizes digital techniques in disorienting mirror images to illustrate our conflicted attitude toward the environment, which is characterized by representations of landscape replacing actual nature. While **Dennis Bertram** does not in fact employ digital techniques in his abstracted cityscapes whose golden skies are reminiscent of illuminated manuscript pages, his paintings do resemble digitally produced graphs constructed from infinitely small and simple particles, expressing the complexity of contemporary life. Addressing a different kind of complexity, two photographers included in the show, **Doug DuBois** and **Jennifer Karady**, engage the intricacies of contemporary photographic practice, as they epitomize opposing strategies. While DuBois's work capitalizes on the medium's claim to verisimilitude, Karady's portraits straddle the boundaries between truth and fiction.

The above group of artists might be said to investigate external issues, whereas the following four artists take a closer look internally. **Kathleen Ann Thum**, for example, thinks of her large drawings as internal landscapes of our bodies. By laying out the drawing on a table, the artist hopes that the viewer will have an intimate experience with her work, drawing parallels between it and the impermanence of our bodies. **Debra Birmingham** also tries to pull the viewer in, inviting him or her into the very act of painting by creating a certain atmospheric light in her small paintings that is every so often interrupted by the appearance of a brightly lit window or butterfly wing. **Linda Price**'s pastel of a heavy rock hanging in the balance serves, according to the artist, as a kind of self-portrait, perhaps a reflection of the artist's heavy soul searching, in which the suspended rock functions as a metaphor for a burden lifted. Through her choice of materials, **Sharon McConnell**'s work also participates in the discourse of the body, as the hog gut resembles skin and the red thread evokes veins and blood. Combining decorative and minimalist strategies in her expansive grid of embroideries, McConnell engages us in a contemplation of transience and mortality.

**Nava Lubelski** is another artist who uses the decorative technique of embroidery. Reminiscent of mid-century drip paintings, she fills in the shapes of the stains with her needlework in various shades of red, thus superimposing the macho action painting with the feminine act of stitching. **Richard Harrington**'s work deals more directly with sexual identity, as it investigates the origins of its formation in the context of family, school, and, more broadly, language, to the extent *CONTINUED* ►

that he creates a revised dictionary. **Jennifer Pepper** is also interested in the effects of language, but from a more phenomenological perspective. Her *Artist Statement* should be seen, according to the artist, “as a liquid spillage from the mouth, inferring the physical and malleable qualities of language.” While Harrington and Pepper see language as complicit in existing power relations, other artists in the show address issues of power in different ways.

In digital montages, **Calla Thompson** examines the ways power is enacted by looking at small actions that involve physical and psychological struggles. **Marion Wilson** looks at the issue of power within the broad context of society, in which the homeless are the quintessentially powerless. Printed on each sheet of a roll of toilet paper is the phrase “When you sleep on the street you don’t have dreams” – or toilet paper, for that matter, making a connection between the fulfillment of basic needs and the imagination.

Working with unconventional materials is quite common among contemporary artists. **Marietta Hoferer**, for instance, uses common Scotch Tape to create her highly geometric abstractions that are derived from such sources as weaving and architecture and involve time-consuming and labor-intensive processes bordering on the obsessive. We often discuss repetitious work practices in the context of self-taught artists, but artists like **Alex O’Neal** complicate this simplistic separation between the work of trained and so-called outsider artists. The installation of his acrylic paintings on paper of wide-eyed, open-mouthed – in the words of the artist – “militant hillbilly moralists” captures a certain ritualistic quality that is also reflected in the artist’s process. Speaking of process, **Walter McConnell** has cast and then arranged by size hundreds of porcelain knick-knacks from second-hand commercial molds for his huge assemblage, *A Theory of Everything*, proposing that these kitschy images are, in the artist’s own words, “an irrepressible part of our collective imagination.” A similar kind of nostalgia is at work in **Susan Hamburger**’s installation, which was prompted by her interest in, as she describes, “a national obsession with home renovation as a form of entertainment.” Made of foam board, her china cabinets are filled with collectible plates, on which the artist has replaced traditional patterns with quickly disappearing contemporary views of Williamsburg, Brooklyn, turning them into oblique critiques of gentrification.

In these many different ways, the Saltonstall artists speak to us about important issues of the day, which makes their work unmistakably contemporary.

*ANDREA INSELMANN* Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, April 2006



Debra Bermingham



Dennis Bertram



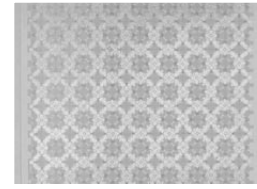
Doug DuBois



Susan Hamburger



Richard S. Harrington



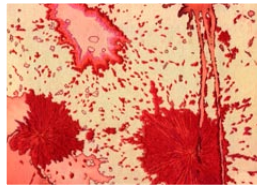
Marietta Hoferer



Jennifer Karady



Martin Kruck



Nava Lubelski



Mary Lum



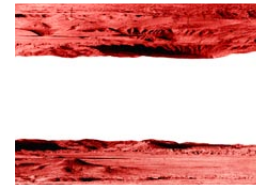
Sharon McConnell



Walter McConnell



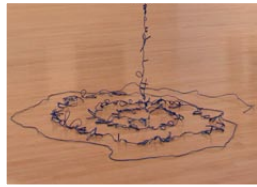
Sarah McCoubrey



Lisa Mordhorst



Alex O'Neal



Jennifer Pepper



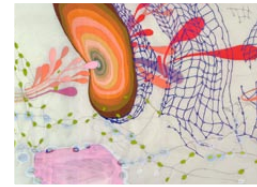
Linda M. Price



Alison Slein



Calla Thompson

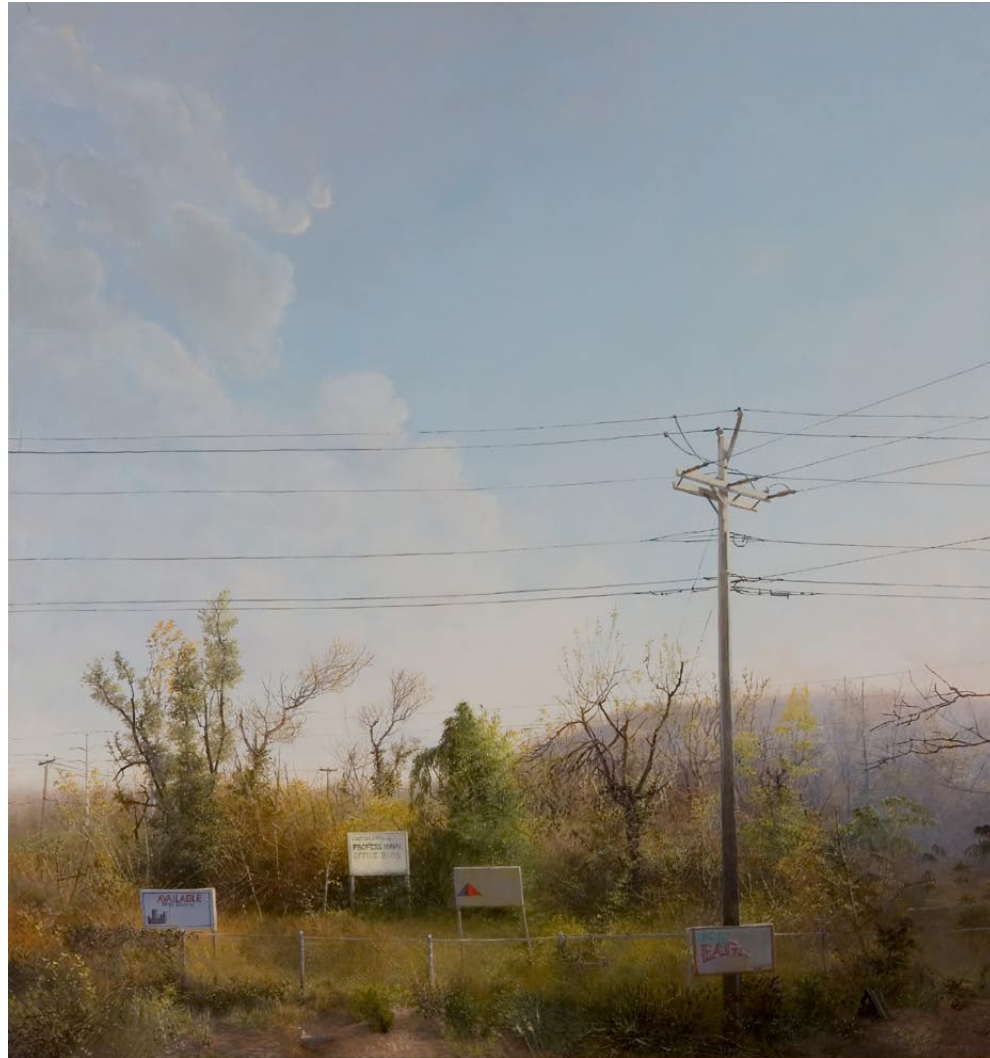


Kathleen Ann Thum



Marion Wilson

# Catalogue of the Exhibition



*Available*, 2001  
Oil on wood panel  
22 x 24"

**SARAH McCOUBREY** For the past 14 years I have been painting the suburban landscape where I live as it emerges from abandoned and functioning quarries and farms. All types of landscapes intersect here. I have been looking at the small incidents revealing the character of this intersection. These paintings serve as a documentation of what I find. Technically, they are constructed of thin layers of paint. The process mirrors the meaning. The accumulation of colors, objects and marks reveals the landscapes layered history.



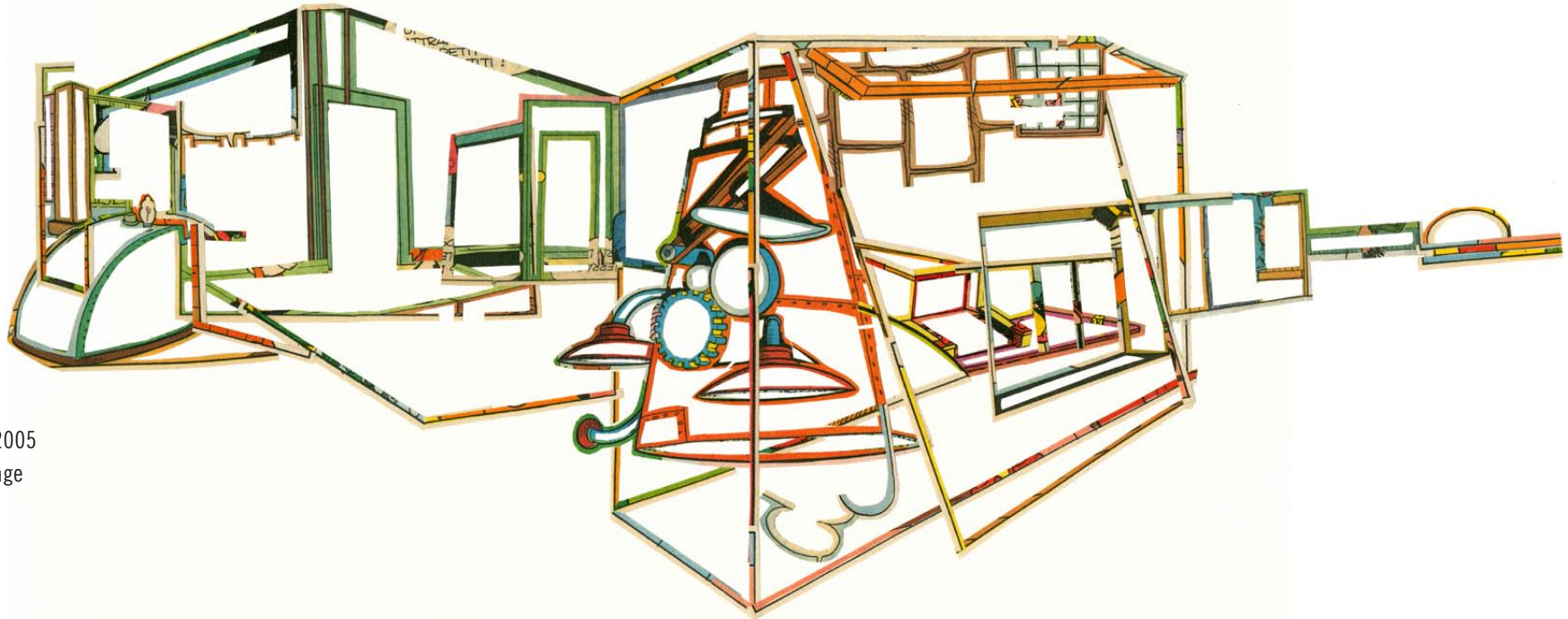




*White Forest, 2005*  
Piezographic print on panel  
7 x 30"

**MARTIN KRUCK** *Xcapes* is a series of digitally manipulated notions of familiarity, presence, artifice, and location. Recurrence and universality frame the experience of the landscapes that simultaneously resemble nowhere and everywhere. The figure, artificially placed in the *Xcape*, reinforces the significance (or insignificance) of the vista by reenacting the posture of gazing meaningfully toward it. I'm fascinated by the simultaneous affect of location and dislocation landscape can provide; the ability of the genre to capture transcendence, and the translocation of the sublime when something gets in the way.





*Nowhere #40, 2005*  
Cut-paper collage  
16 x 20"

**MARY LUM** My work attempts to make connections between disparate entities such as fact and fiction and interior and exterior. Through a process of looking for, collecting, combining and transforming images and texts I re-contextualize things that may have been overlooked in their original states. The work has various forms, most based in collage, and includes painting, drawing, photographs, installation, and artist's books. I have been working with various permutations and extensions of these ideas for more than twenty years.

In another ongoing series of related work I have utilized several vintage French comic books, probably from the seventies. From these comics I have extracted linear fragments of architectural space which I then use as elements to reorganize into new spaces that have never existed, either in fact or in fiction. The resulting small scale collages (titled *Nowhere*) are often blown up to human scale and painted directly on the wall. At this size one feels able to physically enter the invented space in much the same way as we mentally enter the space of a novel or a short story. Fact and fiction, interior and exterior become entangled.

All of the above mentioned work links us to more or less transient events and feelings. The physical objects of the work are meant to both be seen and be seen through. What I make is, in the end, essentially invisible.

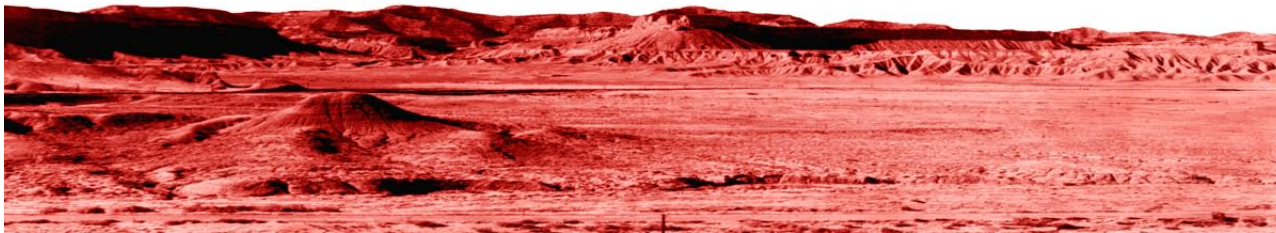
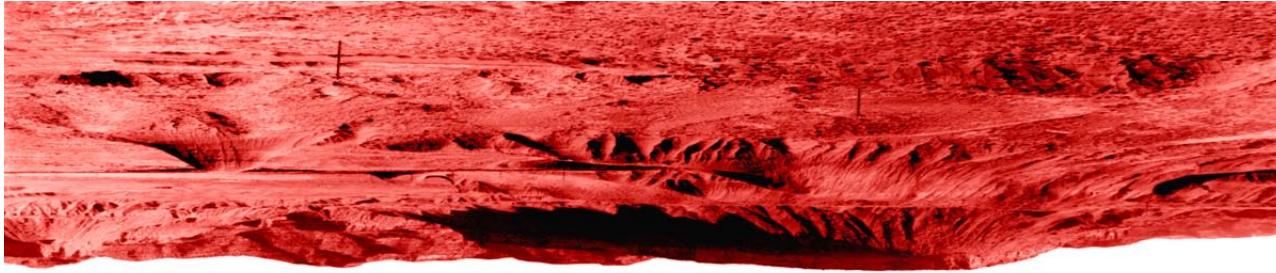




*View*, 2002  
Digital print  
46 x 36"

**ALISON SLEIN** The image “View” is part of a series of photographs that focus on miniature architectural dioramas. The spaces in these quasi-cinematic set-pieces suggest a solitary serenity found in abandoned homes, while at the same time a few of the images imply a previous destruction represented by torn out walls, floors and ceilings. The large scale of the completed digital images distorts the small scale of the architecture. A majority of the images are photographed in actual landscape settings using natural light. The skeletal remains of the living spaces reveal bucolic landscape exteriors.





*Between #20, 2004*  
Pigmented ink on backlit film;  
unique print  
40 x 60"

**LISA MORDHORST** In my work I create a dislocated yet pensive view of space, environment and landscape by employing contradictory sensations of nostalgia, disorientation and familiarity, the generic versus specific, place and non-place, manmade versus the natural.

Playing with the “real” characteristics of photography, I use both traditional and digital methods to create false landscapes from existing landscapes, mimicking and mocking the ironical actions taken by our society, destroying the natural landscape to create false and fake landscapes whether it be a mall, housing development or fake rock wall. Our society creates paradoxically. Idolizing and idealizing and simultaneously destroying, consuming and rearranging.

I’m interested in perpetuating the anxieties of human interpretation of landscape and beauty by portraying a disintegrating landscape where familiarity and nostalgia interpret the concept of instability.





*Valley*, 2005  
Oil on canvas  
48 x 36"

**DENNIS BERTRAM** I am fascinated with the idea of complexity, especially my bewilderment at the complexity of living, of getting along on a day-to-day basis, of people living and working with each other. I thought about cities, especially medieval cities, when cities started to take form. I thought about medieval manuscripts and their images of towns and cathedrals and surrounding walls that could protect and yet harbor deadly disease. I thought about religious paintings, with their backgrounds and haloes of saints and folds of robes painted in gold leaf providing the viewer with the comfort of anticipated salvation. I thought about atoms, molecules, microorganisms, plant and animal life, herds and societies: the ever-more-encompassing levels of organization and complexity. I thought about alphabets, the construction of language, and the communication of ideas and thoughts. I thought about harmonious color palettes and constructing complex images out of simple ones. I thought about myself, my past, my present and I thought about how some ambitions come to pass and others do not. And in all this, I thought about people getting on with their lives and with each other. I thought about painting this.





*My Mother's Scar*, 2003  
C-print  
30 x 40"

**DOUG DuBOIS** I have been photographing my family since the mid-1980s. (This photograph was) chosen from a series of recent portraits. The images allude to each family member's emotional life and private traumas. While the photographs may speak of my parent's divorce, my sister's relationship to her son or my brother's nocturnal habits, they hold no specific narrative. The events occur outside the frame leaving the photographs to trace their effects.





*In Memoriam: Angela and Angel,  
her First Love Freeze-Dried  
30 Years Ago, Moneta, VA, 2004*  
Chromogenic color print on Fujiflex  
30 x 30"

**JENNIFER KARADY** Influenced by drama, color and light found in tableaux painting, my work folds real stories, people and truths into fictional and allegorical scenarios. Throughout the history of photography, the binary poles of documentary photography and fine art photography were most often considered at odds with each other. I seek to indulge this tension between authenticity and fabrication by staging fictional scenarios which reflect something real about the subjects. The weight of implied narrative asks that each photograph be read like a text; it is loaded with symbolic objects and gestures, psychologically charged space, and references to subjects outside itself (e.g. art history, Bible, contemporary media.)





*Bull's Eye*, 2005  
Gouache and graphite on rice paper  
17 x 52"

**KATHLEEN ANN THUM** I think of my drawings as internal landscapes of our bodies; cells, veins, skin, nerves. These landscapes are systems that our lives depend upon. They circulate blood, compress or expand to breathe, filter or cover to protect and carry signals or messages. They are all interrelated and interdependent. I use these systems to construct various structures in my drawings. Like our internal systems, the structures are linear, flowing, clustered, dense, and intertwined.

The materials and the presentation of my work are as important as the imagery. The immediacy and directness of the medium (gouache and graphite capture the movements of my own body drawing) and the material (a delicate skin-like paper) echo the content of the work. By presenting the layered drawings pinned directly to the wall or laid out on a table like a map, the viewer has a more intimate experience with the work. My hope is that the viewer will make an emotive, physical connection to the impermanent, ethereal nature of the pieces.







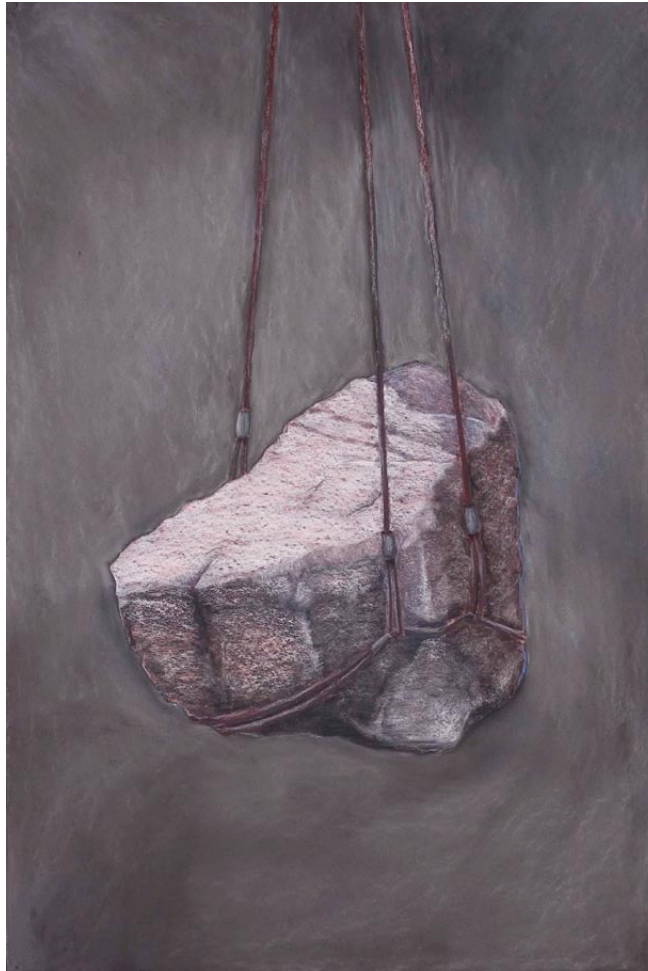
February, 2001  
Oil on panel  
22 x 30" overall

**DEBRA BERMINGHAM** My paintings are deceptively simple. They emanate a bluish-gray light which is cool and filtered. The space depicted is seen from above, dissociated from specific context, with a certain softness of clarity, as if seen from remove.

A similar tone was rendered by Wim Wenders in his film "Wings of Desire." In it, the camera views the forlorn and dissociated lives of Berlin city dwellers from above, in tinted shades of black and white. "Wings of Desire" is an approximation of Rilke's "Joy Has Gone Astray." In the film, the only salvation comes from a young Chaplinesque trapeze artist who awakens a bit of child-like joy in the main character. Similarly, my paintings are uniformly monochromatic and severe, yet every so often a toy will appear, or a butterfly wing, a small flash of iridescence in the brooding silence.

My most recent work pairs these simple images with all-black panels. This serves to intensify the paintings' subtle modulations of color. It also serves to invite the viewer into the very act of painting; that ever-daunting effort to concentrate experience and memory with a bit of color and a brush.

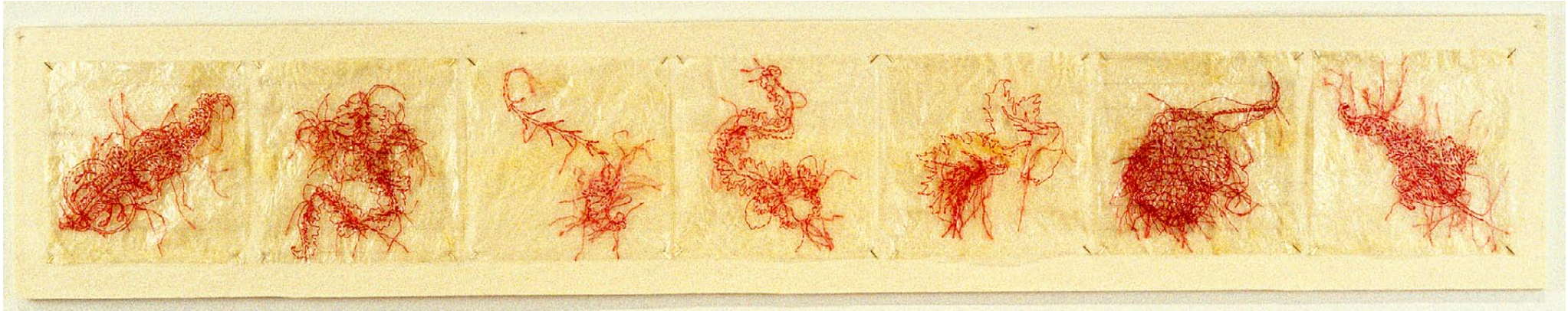




*Quarrying I*, 2005  
Pastel on paper  
56 x 37"

**LINDA M. PRICE** I think of all my paintings or drawings as self-portraiture, not in the strict representation of a face or body, but in the use of objects, colors, textures, and compositions that speak to a life's experiences. In recent years, I am using rocks as the foundation of my painted world. They only seem simple. They are often multi-faceted and complex objects, not just to paint, but in what they allow me to paint...a range of content from the humorous and self-mocking to the poetic and meditative. Most of the past two-year's work is of quarried rock. "Quarry" has numerous meanings, but the ones I like the best are: "a rich and productive source; a square or diamond shape; to extract by long and careful searching." In the end, the work is a reflection of the quarrying within myself.





*Leavings, 2002*

Gut, thread, felt, and pins

8 x 45 x 1"

**SHARON McCONNELL** This series of work, *Trace Elements*, is the culmination of many years working primarily with two simple materials: gut and thread. I am interested in the materials' formal properties – a thin drawn line fading in and out of a translucent field – and theoretically in the materials' ability to reference the body, transience and mortality. Hog gut, when rinsed, expanded and formed into gossamer sheets resembles skin; red thread evokes veins and blood. Meticulously – almost surgically – I embroider structured patterns, such as fingerprints or cellular diagrams into the transparent membrane. In another work, a list of trace elements found in the human body is embroidered on a thirty foot scroll. With direct reference to science, *Trace Elements* reveals a somewhat clinical approach to the subject of mortality the distance allows for a slower unfolding of connections between material, images, pattern and text.



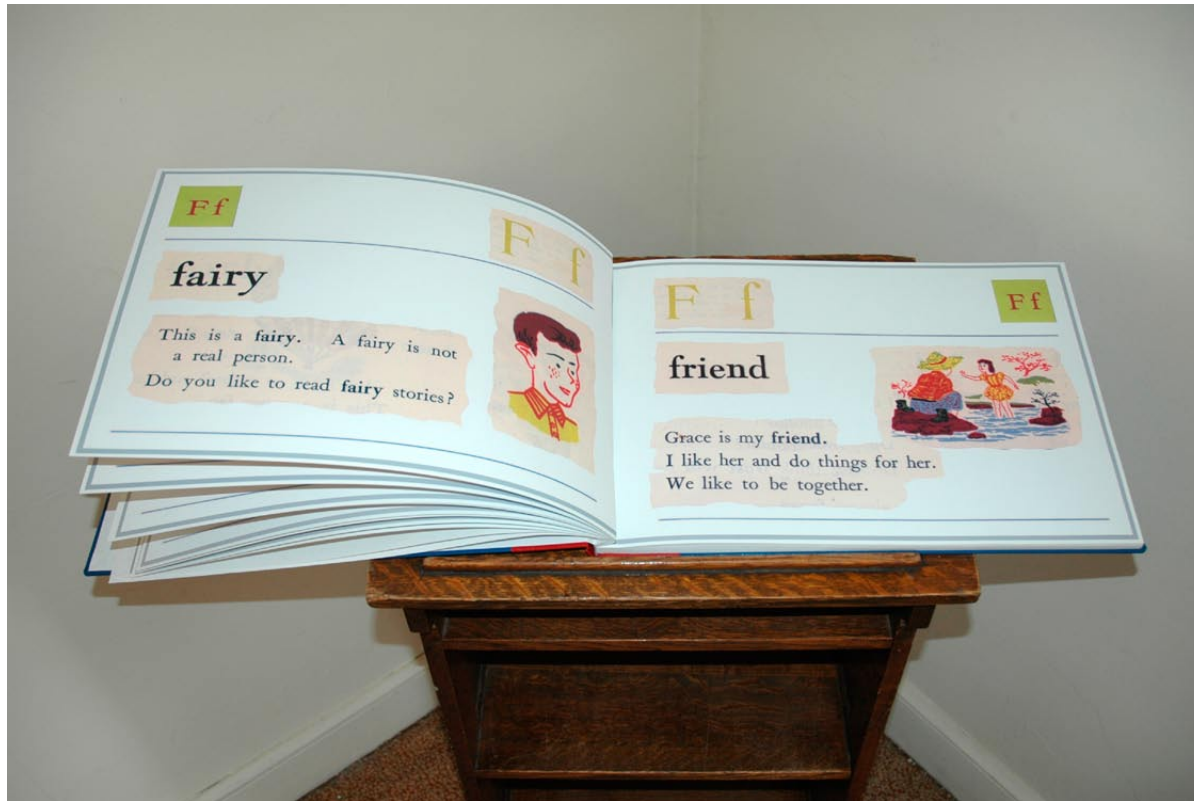


*Candy Soup*, 2003  
Thread on stained canvas  
14 x 12"

**NAVA LUBELSKI** My work is an exploration of the contradictory activities of spoiling and of mending, juxtaposing unexpected or grotesque forms with the traditionally decorative and feminine medium of threadwork. Canvases are found or spattered with drips and splotches. These organic shapes become an unlikely pattern to be sewn into, with the mending/healing notion of stitch responding to the imagery of contamination. The spills are transformed by the application of delicate detailing reminiscent of moth wings and other microscopic forms, revealed only through close examination of the work.

Repetitive or compulsive behavior is commonly explained as a symptom of repressed emotions, largely anger or depression. Repetitive, meticulous labor, according to psychological theory, can function as a holding pattern to bind or subvert uncomfortable emotions, which have no natural outlet or open expression. Time-consuming hand stitching is a perfect medium for examining what can be revealed through the process of subverting difficult emotions into an act of labor. Rather than rigidly stitching according to the pattern of the stains, I allow the imagery of agitation, impatience, or even quirkiness and exuberance, locked in the very activity to insert and reveal itself spontaneously in the structure of the threadwork.



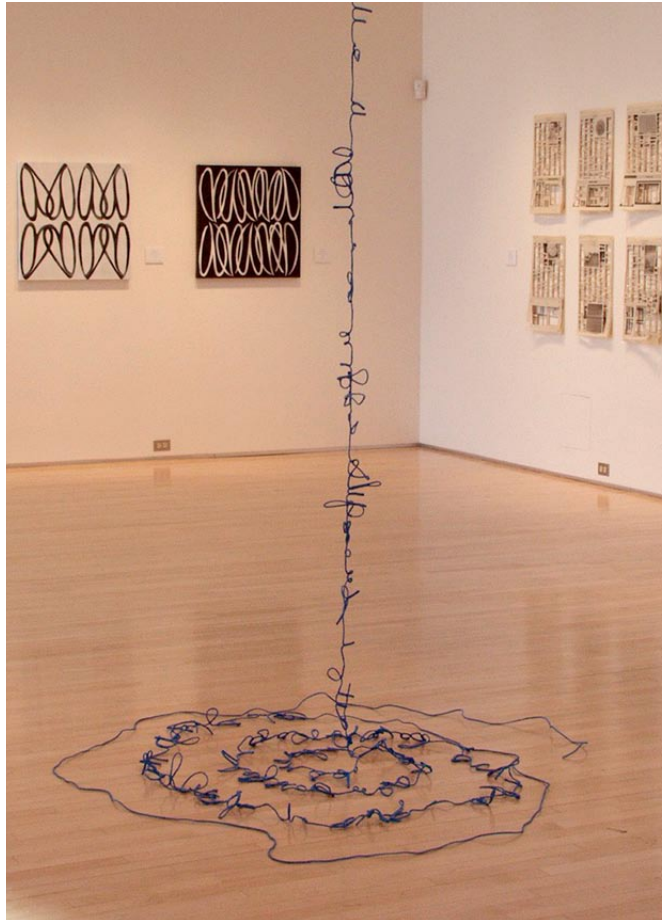


*The Revised Rainbow Dictionary*, 2003  
Cloth-bound digital prints  
on oak pedestal  
48 x 22 x 16"

**RICHARD S. HARRINGTON** By appropriating existing images and text found in the toys, games, textbooks and teaching materials of my own formative years of the 1960s and 1970s, my work investigates the origins of identity formation in the context of family, school, and play. My recent work probes deeper into the relationship of popular culture iconography on early gay identity development. I use these source materials to articulate a world which has always existed, but is not acknowledged or represented. By using a wide spectrum of familiar materials including vinyl wallpaper, aluminum siding, newsprint, floor tiles, school desks and dittoes, the work becomes easily accessible, yet disquieting in the honesty of its content.

My process includes painstakingly reproducing these found images and text in a quasi paint by number method. Much of the work is comprised of multiple pieces; referencing the repetition and reiteration of elementary school learning, as well as the hypnotic sprawling sameness of the suburban development in which I was raised. Because of the use of recognizable icons, materials and objects, viewers are drawn into what appears to be a world of the familiar. Upon closer inspection, this world is turned upside-down revealing another world which has existed in parallel to the familiar but until now has remained invisible.

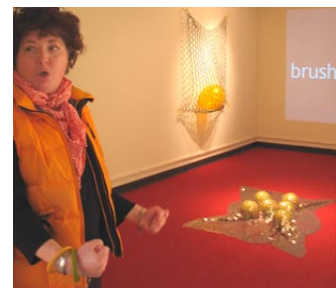




*Artist Statement, 2004*  
Crocheted nylon, dipped in rubber  
150 feet x 4" x 4"

**JENNIFER PEPPER** In my drawing and sculptural works, I make use of found objects and dis/locate them from their original cultural frames. By stripping the material from one context and incorporating it into another – the object has the potential to be complex, alive, available and audience-activated. In new configurations, the meaning of an object or word or idea, embraces endless options, rather than what may have seemed to be the singular consensus of a utilitarian form..

Created as liquid spillages from the mouth, my drawings are active, contrasting hues and visual vibrations that infer the physical and malleable quality language continually reveals. It is impossible for any language to remain static. In my works, I attempt to bring forth the temporal attributes of language offers as it articulates and names our world.



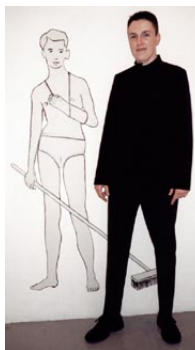


*Untitled (Sling Shot), Untitled (Eye Hole), Untitled (Baton);*  
from the series Bleak and Bleaker, 2005

Digital prints  
20 x 15" each

**CALLA THOMPSON** In my work, I examine the ways that power is enacted. I do not explore totalitarian power or repressive regimes. Instead, I investigate small actions that beget small amounts of power, scrutinizing gains and losses. Always unresolved, these scenes of cloaked combat suggest both the physical and psychological struggles of the characters. These conflicts are fixed mid-gesture, leaving the viewer to decide whether something has just occurred, or is about to occur.

The visual language that I use is both recognizable and disjointed. The familiar is manifest in the iconographic nature of my characters, while the peculiar is present in the absurd nature of the characters' actions. This fusion of the familiar and the strange enables a wry humor in my work.





*Rest Stop: "When you sleep on the streets you don't have dreams,"*

L. Guzman, 2005

Rubber stamped toilet paper

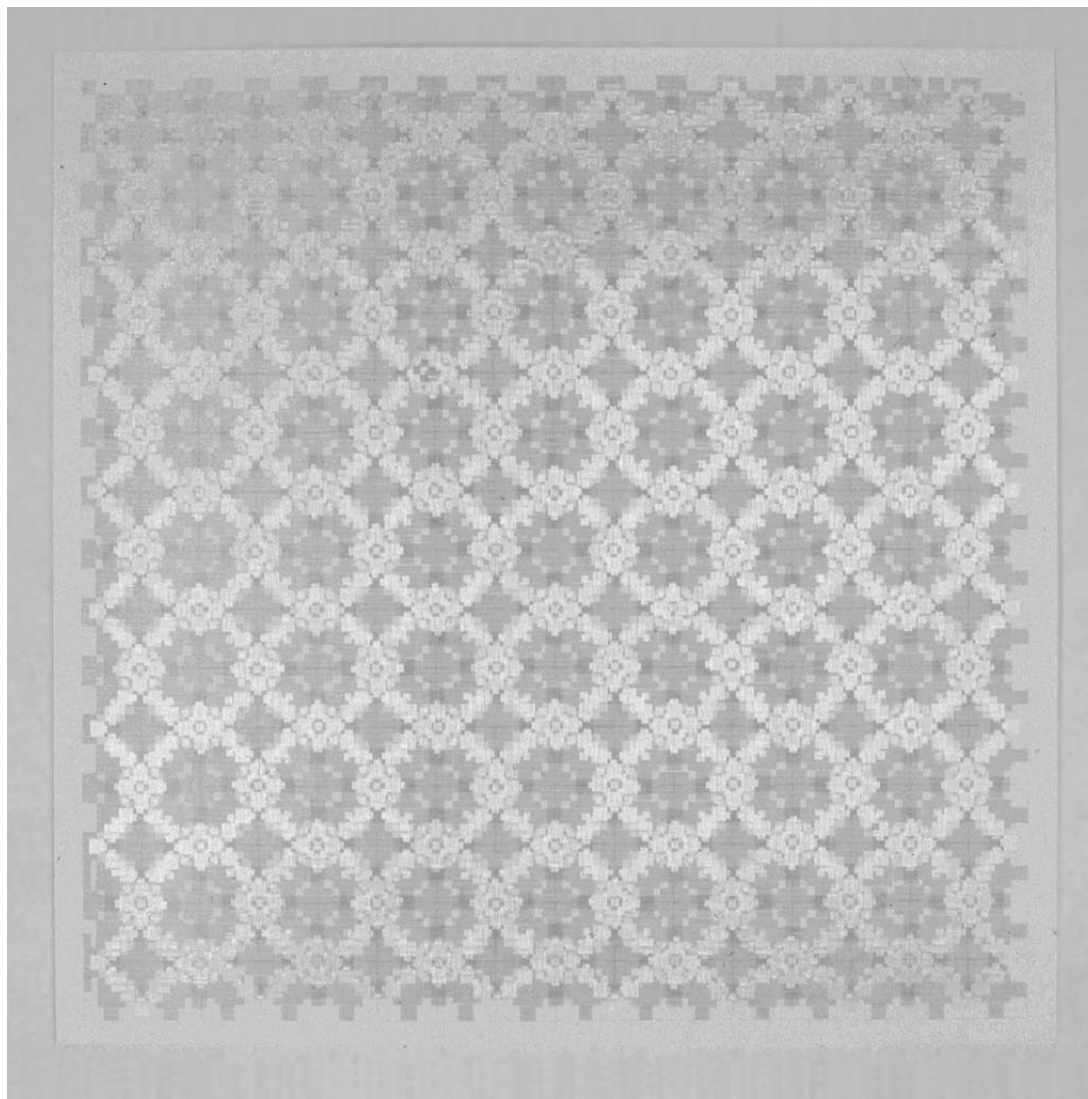
5 x 6 x 6"

**MARION WILSON** In the summer of 2004, I opened a pushcart sculpture street business called This Store Too, commissioned by the New Museum of Contemporary Art in Manhattan. I collaborated with homeless men served by the Bowery Mission in all aspects of the business including the creation of artworks or "merchandise," the sales negotiations and the proceeds of the business. I made small sculptures that were partially drawn from material purchases I made from street persons. For six weeks I operated a street business; pushing the cart, parking it in front of various local businesses around the Bowery and offering the objects for sale. The purpose of these sales was not for financial profit, but rather to make transparent the economy (and the life) of street people and the economy of one artist. Several pieces grew out of a quote by a Bowery resident, Luis Guzman, "when you sleep on the streets you don't have dreams."

I continued my artistic association with Luiz Guzman and continued to make works that were inspired by this quote for a later exhibition called Tender. According to exhibition essayist Mary Murray, "The work in Tender, was a reflection of their friendship, and what Wilson says are "one's shared needs for human creature comforts" – "to have a bed to sleep in and not a chair," "the ability to dream," "to see one's daughter," and "something to do to stave off boredom." Wilson goes beyond any preconceptions of what we may think it is like to be homeless and instead focuses on the small details of what it is to be human."

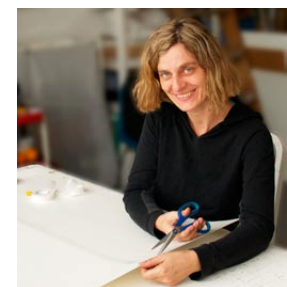






*M-Land, 2004*  
Pencil and tape on paper  
32 x 32"

**MARIETTA HOFERER** I work in a geometric and patterning form with tape. The small handcut pieces of tape are applied over a penciled grid on a sheet of paper. These abstractions contain their own rhythm derived from sources such as architecture and weaving. Light and all of its subtle changing aspects and the geometry I see in organic forms are all central to my work.





*Reach for the Sky*, 2005  
 Acrylic on paper  
 (Installation of  
 several pieces),  
 approx. 108 x 120"

**ALEX O'NEAL** After the 1996 Olympics bombing in Atlanta, my work slowly referred to homegrown terrorists, such as militant hillbilly moralists a la Eric Rudolph. Scenarios show flamboyant redneck hippies, somewhere between vigilantes and anarchists, that may seem “disguised” from the viewer and challenged to blend in socially.

After September 11, my paintings referred to what I called Mesopotamian nightmares that had lion and tiger attacks. These narratives eventually included other animals and the earlier backwoods anarchists to make very unpeaceable kingdoms in works like “Mississippi Law: Stop.” A painting made at Saltonstall in July 2004 includes collaged military patches and suggests a sleazy, psychedelic paramilitary held together by “The Candy Shoestring,” which is also the work’s title.

My current studio focus is on individual “mean hippie” personas – that is, stylized portraits of poorly disguised, wig-wearing and fake-bearded men and women in various states suggesting anarchy, exaltation, zealous ambition, and being arrested – thus, a recurring title, “Reach for the Sky.” Some characters are in ancient frames of mind, being “touched by the tiger.”





*A Theory of Everything*  
(White Version), 2004  
Glazed cast porcelain from  
commercial molds and plywood  
120 x 96 x 96"



**WALTER McCONNELL** The porcelain figurines, pottery, holiday novelties and sentimental bric-a-brac that comprise *A Theory of Everything*, are cast from molds acquired second hand from an under-appreciated bastion of kitsch, the ceramic hobby industry. The entire collection is arranged by size on tiers of shelving and glazed, in one example, like a fluid blue cascade – (the font of popular culture perhaps, forever overflowing.) Decoding the mythologies embodied by any one object in *A Theory of Everything* can be a fascinating exercise; a pleasant trip down memory lane for some, a hellish descent into mawkish sentimentality for others. Either way the porcelain cowboy, the princess, the virgin or the Smurf are substantially worlds unto themselves. Overall however, it is the total shimmering effect, the sheer abundance of statuary and knick-knack, that really captures my attention in this work. For better or worse these are graven images, an irrepressible part of our collective imagination. *A Theory of Everything* might be understood as my magnum opus to this condition.





*Six on Sixth (Gotham Border), 2005*  
Ink on paper on foam board  
Approx. 70 x 32 x 10" (furniture)

**SUSAN HAMBURGER** I am fascinated by the growing national obsession with home renovation as a form of entertainment; with the proliferation of shelter magazines, reality television shows and Home Depots. I am particularly interested in the role that paintings and decorative objects play in this dynamic as expressions of status, class and taste.

My most recent work is a series of cut-outs based on images of collectible plates and place settings. Presented in installation settings, they are drawn and painted in ink on watercolor paper and mounted on archival foam. I have based the dinnerware border patterns on those of the English porcelain company, Spode, with names like "Williamsburg" and "Ruins," but I have replaced the traditional English landscapes and architectural motifs with contemporary views of Brooklyn and my own neighborhood of Williamsburg. With the march of development through the borough, this sentimental format transforms the rapidly disappearing buildings and facades of "old" Brooklyn into icons of nostalgia.

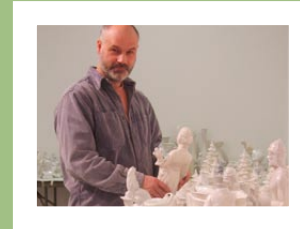




Origins of the  
Saltonstall Foundation



Saltonstall Foundation  
Today



Saltonstall Artists'  
Reflections

## About the Saltonstall Foundation for the Arts

## SALTONSTALL FOUNDATION ORIGINS

**THE CONSTANCE SALTONSTALL FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS** (CSFA) was established in 1994 according to the wishes of Constance Saltonstall, a photographer and painter, who asked that after her death her estate be used to benefit New York State artists and writers. She especially hoped her home and property, a place she found so inspiring, would become a retreat where artists could work. Connie's home is now a place open to artists and writers to take risks, expand their art form, and build careers, keeping New York State's artistic community alive with ideas, talent and resources. Since 1996, CSFA has supported the work of 266 individual New York State artists and writers, distributing over \$1.2 million in grants and fellowships. Connie's gift has become a remarkable living legacy.



Constance Saltonstall  
*self-portrait, 1993*

# SALTONSTALL FOUNDATION TODAY

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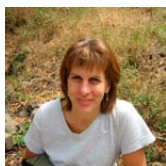
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**THE CONSTANCE SALTONSTALL FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS** is committed to serving the individual New York State artist (especially in the Finger Lakes region) through all stages of the creative process. We serve New York State artists and writers with summer fellowships, grants, seminars and access to free studio space. Learn more about our programs and how you can get involved at [www.saltonstall.org](http://www.saltonstall.org)



# SALTONSTALL ARTISTS' REFLECTIONS



## **SHARON McCONNELL**

“I received a Saltonstall Grant at a crucial moment in my career, at the beginning stages of a new body of work. The grant provided essential time and materials, and most importantly, it provided momentum – confirming the potential of a new direction.”



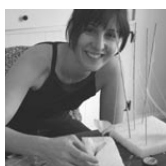
## **WALTER McCONNELL**

“Artists invest precious time and resources on magnificently unwieldy projects, with no tangible reward in sight. We risk failure, or worst, that no one will be interested. The Saltonstall Foundation comes across with a grant and we are tremendously encouraged. A light appears at the end of the tunnel.”



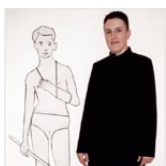
## **SARAH McCOUBREY**

“Having the support of the Saltonstall Foundation allowed me a sense of freedom in my work. I felt able to pursue things I had been thinking about without needing to know what the result would be. I feel very proud to be affiliated with the Foundation and think the community of artists and writers it has created makes this area a richer place to live.”



## **ALISON SLEIN**

“For me, receiving an individual artist grant from the Saltonstall Foundation was an amazing gift, which supported the creation of a new series of photographs. Because of this support I was able to work unhindered by financial concerns, confident that the work would be brought to fruition due to this wonderful grant. I am very grateful for the generosity and support of the Saltonstall Foundation.”



## **CALLA THOMPSON**

“I drew a line around myself, indulging my work shamelessly. I produced until I fell asleep. I began my journey with both photography and drawing, and sometimes the two.”





CONSTANCE SALTONSTALL  
*Foundation for the Arts*

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Catalogue booklet and CD-ROM  
published on the occasion  
of the exhibition

***Saltonstall*** *The First 10 Years*,  
Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art,  
Cornell University, Ithaca, NY  
June 24 – August 20, 2006

Photo of Sarah McCoubrey's  
work by Aaron Iglar

Photo of Susan Hamburger's work  
by Patty Cateyura; work exhibited  
courtesy of The Waskowmium

Catalogue booklet and CD-ROM  
designed by Michael Rider,  
Rider Design, Ithaca, NY