

Beneath The Surface At Discovery Art Gallery

The Discovery Art Gallery at 3 Brewster Street in Glen Cove, New York, will present *Beneath the Surface* from August 2 through August 29. The opening reception is on Sunday, August 2 from 3 to 5:30 p.m. at the gallery. Featured artists are Chris Coffin, Susan Finer, Alice Sawyer and Frank Wimberley. Gallery hours are 12-4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Please call 676-9782 for further information.

Each artist represented is attempting to create a vivid visual awareness about the thoughts, the concerns that form the focus of his or her work. Their insights are expressed through fresh, witty, unexpected, juxtapositions of form, color and material.

Chris Coffin

The struggle of the natural element to rise and surface above that of a pressing industrial force is addressed within Chris Coffin's sculpture. Coffin tries not to express a sense of pseudo-environmentalism that has been the mode in recent years. He is, however, attempting to socially educate people about the issues that surround his work. He wants viewers to look deeper into the symbolic value of the materials he chooses and how they interact: Cork represents the purity and fragility of the ocean environment; lead is dense/oppressive, like industrial man, blind to the destruction being inflicted on the environment.

In his "jar" series, the artist works with the placement of lead, within jars of water, which presses down and keeps the natural element from rising and growing, much like the abuse he feels that man has inflicted upon earth's most beautiful and valuable resource. Presented in this exhibition, as well, are the artist's "box" series: Pine boxes like coffins symbolizing the death of the ocean. The impact of the sculptures is due, in part, to the physical space the boxes occupy; standing erect and threatening, they have a strong, ominous presence. In his work, Coffin attempts to bridge the gap between what objects are... and what they signify.

Susan Finer

Drawing upon her finely honed skill as a hand-weaver, Susan Finer goes beyond those achievements into mixed media to create elegant, witty compositions in textile. Currently working in the Boston area, Finer was raised on Long Island where her immediate family still resides in Glen Cove.

Finer explores the meaning behind facades, the secrets beneath surfaces. She asks what sort of things have fallen between the cracks or are hiding between the lines? Which want to remain hidden and which want to see the light of day? Which are cruelly exposed and which emerge, giddy and triumphant?

Dark shadow spaces, private sorrows and wounds are revealed and mourned. Quirks and surprises, buried treasures are brought to light and celebrated.

Since the artist's background is weaving, the grid is present in almost all of her work. Increasingly, however, unpredictable organic forms are making their way to the surface.

Alice Sawyer

Sawyer's art addresses a social phenomenon known as "the pursuit of beauty", which she sees as a destructive—not benign—influence on society, particularly on American women. Through exaggeration, distortion and fantastical and symbolic

imagery, her art keeps its distance from reality and thus encourages viewer awareness rather than defensive reflexes. She utilizes the female form—fat ones, thin ones and ones fat and thin at the same time—to freely explore a wide range of media and techniques.

A personal vocabulary of materials and symbols is important in the artist's work. Eyes—particularly green eyes of jealousy—and mirrors convey inescapable, critical observation. Enlarged hands represent

material groping and small feet indicate figures lacking a secure balance in their lives. The energy of anger and dismay embodied in ripped and crumpled paper—materials deemed worthless and disposable—shape her overweight figures. Red, white and blue unequivocally set the scene in America.

Frank Wimberley

In order to create the spontaneous gesture,
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a freshness of movement and to convey to the viewer an intimate and expressive quality, there are a vast array of subtle decisions made by the artist—beneath the surface—to achieve the effortless exterior.

The artist uses a variety of painting materials and tools in order to create his abstract works. Their composition involves the blending and application of acrylic paints, mediums and pastes to unprimed duck canvas stapled onto heavy duty stretchers with a tension and surface suitable for a vigorous working of all materials.

Wimberley's approach to painting,

known as *Abstract Expression* is open to the enjoyment and use of personal gesture. This begins at times with an initial color of brushed stains or impasto applied with a spatula. Usually the spatulas are of the artist's creation, made of notched wooden tools fashioned from a flat square of wood which can add various patterns to the stroke of paint as it is pulled across the surface of the canvas. Wimberley says that each painting develops a direction or feeling of its own in the early stages of development. At that time the painting presents unique problems in color and balance which must then be probed... and solved.

In the end that problem may still exist, it may be absorbed, hidden or partially concealed in the underpainting contributing to the resulting textures and gestures which give the work its expressive quality.