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New Sausalito exhibit highlights diverse sculptures



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Tradition, whimsy, audacity and inventiveness all combine in a new sculpture exhibit at the Sausalito Center for the Arts.

A collaboration by the National Sculpture Society and the Sausalito Center for the Arts, “The Art of Form” opened with a well-attended reception last Saturday.

Running through June 15, the exhibit features more than 50 sculptures from a couple dozen artists, plus many arresting portraits by painter Paul Morin and others working in two dimensions. The main thrust of the show is diversity in sculpture — from human busts and torsos to animals realistic and fanciful to pieces that are exquisite design exercises.

Andrey Sledkov draws inspiration from 19th-century Western artist Frederic Remington with two sizable pieces of Native Americans on horseback, “Tribe Chief” and “Ute Chief.” He also ventures into anti-war territory with “Tears of Motherlands,” a three-person scene in liquid marble of two distraught women standing over a scrawny and likely injured man. Among the several approximately life-size busts on display is a ceramic piece titled simply “President Zelenskyy” by Marin artist Cornelia Nevitt, a mute reminder of Ukraine’s heroic leadership and steadfastness in the face of long-running horror in Eastern Europe.

Paul Reiber has some labor-intensive wood carvings in this show, two figurative pieces, “Anguish” and “Beware,” and some coalesced aquatic creatures titled “Fishball.” Among the most impressive wooden structures is Stieg’s “Strata,” a 7-foot-tall tower of stacked carved spheres — a beautiful decorative design.

Exercises in design are plentiful in exhibits like this. Emil Yanos’ “Scattering Theory” is a flat wall-mounted collection of nine rough circles in square frames, resembling woofers in beat-up loudspeakers. Mark Brodie’s “Spatial Ambiguity #3” is a cast-glass-on-granite collection of rectangular geometric shapes, while Jonathan Livingston’s “Gnomon for Gina” is a tall length of white-painted aluminum angle penetrated throughout its length by precisely placed small nails. Pamela Merory Dam offers flat wall-hung steel wire creations “Covalent Bonds II” and “Vignettes II,” while Turaj Ebrahimi presents a collection of compact welded-steel pieces called simply “Four Wall Sculptures.”

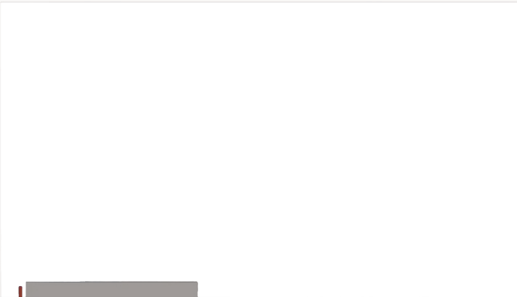
Christine Cianci has beautiful ceramic-with-pigment bas-relief wall hangings “Allegory of the Tarot” and “In the Garden,” while Heidi Wastweet ventures into bas-relief realism with “Portrait of Nanette Dyer” and “Japanese-American Internment.”

The only dog in the exhibit — not a joke — is Fan Yu’s fierce-looking “One More Step,” presumably a warning not to come any closer. Human figures include Nathalie Whisman’s fired-clay golden torso “Midas Gal,” Moana Ponder’s “Broken Wing,” Konrad Dunton’s evocative “Journey Inwards” and two seated people in “Attachment Therapy” by Ann Capitan. Catherine Bohrman’s translucent green glass figurine “Lithe” is simply beautiful.

“It’s a regional show,” said sculptor Lance Glasser, making explicit the show’s promotional tagline, “Perspectives from the West.”

Glasser’s bronze pieces are epitomized by “Nevertheless, She Persisted,” a 22-inch-tall depiction of a climbing woman unencumbered by any structure. His “Kunoichi” is a similarly scaled bronze statue of a sword-wielding warrior woman, apparently in the heat of battle.

Bronzes are everywhere at the Sausalito Center for the Arts. “Meet the Shoebill Stork” by Jacquelyn Giuffré riffs on natural avian forms while not being a realistic representation, and Christopher Keating offers a humorous take on breakfast with his wall-hung “Sunny Side Up.” Adam Matano goes big with “Rascal,” a fantastically rendered gigantic eagle, and “Quarrel,” the head of an ibex with massive horns, holding an arrow in its mouth.



Marin sculptor Brandon Stieg’s “Rise” is among the most imposing — and funny — pieces in the gallery. At more than 7 feet high, it’s an expertly rendered tentacle of a giant octopus with a hapless human diver at its tip, like a fantasy from a classic undersea adventure. “20,000 Leagues Under the Sea,” anyone?

Horses are perpetually popular for artists in all media. There are plenty at “The Art of Form,” from a disturbingly detached and almost life-size head in fired clay by Mohammad Ranjbar Sadeghi to “Blue Blood” by Rosie Irwin Price, a sweet depiction in dark bronze of a reclining horse grooming itself. “The Itch” by Deanna Rae C. Montero is a delightful little amber-colored depiction of a horse scratching its face with a foreleg.

Objective to the contrary, exhibits such as this invariably prompt questions of favorites. For me, best in show is Susan Amorde’s humorous “All Things Considered,” an old travel case turned on end so that one compartment serves as a sort of closet with a figure of a woman standing in it. Outside the closet are three similar-looking women standing back-to-back as if contemplating their purpose or identity. Amorde’s distortions of perspective and relative size are brilliant. So are her implications.

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If you go

What: “The Art of Form: Perspectives from the West”

Where: Sausalito Center for the Arts, 750 Bridgeway, Sausalito

When: Through June 15; 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays

Admission: Free, donations accepted

Information: sausalitocenterforthearts.org

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