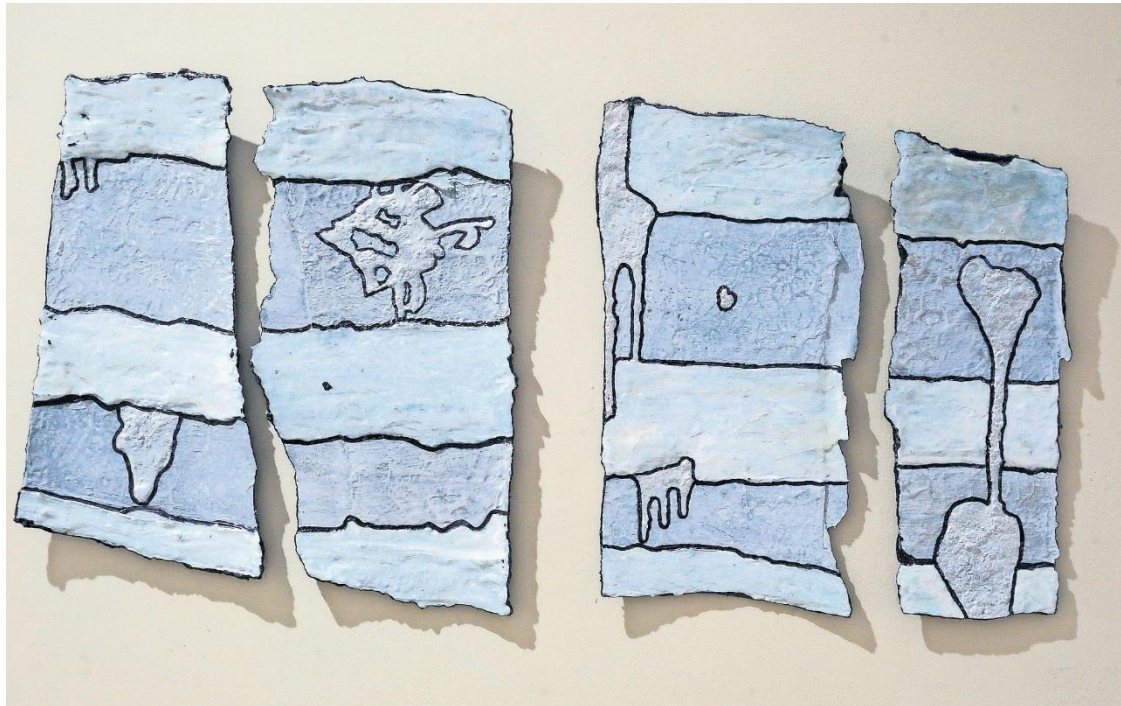


# The forest, nontraditionally, at SPA

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By Mary Gow

ART EXHIBIT



*Kristina Gosh "Metallic Arbor, Disjointed (I See Our Birch from the City)" JEB WALLACE-BRODEUR / STAFF PHOTO*

Shadows and light, branches and trunks, the quiet and occasional cacophony of forests — going into the woods offers immediate and abundant feelings.

"Seeing the Forests for the Trees," a new exhibition in the Main Floor Gallery at Studio Place Arts in Barre, takes viewers into the woods. The show includes works by more than 30 artists, many pieces in nontraditional media inspired by the feeling of forests.

SPA's annual silent auction, with artwork donated to support the art center and its programming, fills the Second Floor Gallery. A selection of Rene Schall's meticulous and creative calligraphy and photographs and photo montages by Wendy James are featured along with work by several other area artists.

The Third Floor Gallery explodes with color and texture in Roger Goldenberg's "Visual Jazz — Homage to the Earth," with vibrant oil on canvas assemblages and a series of monotypes inspired by climate, weather and geology.

The opening of the three shows is celebrated at SPA's annual BASH, the Big Arty SPA Happening, this Friday, May 12. With art, live music and refreshments, the BASH is an annual SPA fundraiser.

"Seeing the Forests for the Trees," the second arboreal-themed exhibition at SPA, takes exploration of the subject in a different direction than its popular predecessor. The first show, held nearly a decade ago, was curated around the idea of wild forests.

"People loved that first show, but we never repeat shows, so we wanted to do something that has a different flavor, a different thinking process," said Sue Higby, executive director of SPA. "The show became organized around feeling of a forest — things that aren't simply a painting of a group of trees but rather the way that material is layered, or the way that light plays on an object or some other sensibility, even something that triggers a sound memory.



*Richard Weis: "Among the Trees"*

"This show is about how a forest feels. We wanted it to be a show that had a modern flair," Higby said. "It includes some very contemporary use of media and different ways of thinking about forests."

For example, Tuyen Nguyen's "Analog" considers a tree's branching system using a vintage television antenna.

"You'll see line, you'll see layering, you'll see use of light, you'll see a lot of interesting use of materials, but what you won't see to a large extent is traditional forested landscape," said Higby.

In Frederick Rudi's "Tracks Through Shadows," the viewer never sees the trees but feels their proximity. Blue shadows, cast by winter trunks, lie across an expanse of bright fresh snow. Rudi, of Marshfield, uses the curves of the shadows to reveal a line of fresh tracks through the snow.

Alissa Faber of Burlington uses sculptural pieces of found wood with clear blown glass in her "Blackened Timber Park Series." Her glass vessels nestle around the dark, PolyWhey-coated wood. Each piece of wood, with its unique bends, broken branches and burls, serves as the form for its distinctive glass form, shaped while the glass is in



*Frederick Rudi: "Tracks Through Shadows" JEB WALLACE-BRODEUR / STAFF PHOTO*

its molten state. Besides the beauty of the flowing forms and contrast in materials, the glass perhaps suggests the wood's long relationship with water. Kristina Gosh, of Orange, explains in her artist's statement that her longing for a familiar grove of birch trees inspired her "Metallic Arbor, Disjointed (I See Our Birch From The City)." Using clear tar gel, acrylic and Sharpie on watercolor paper, Gosh evokes the texture and sense of birches in the four-paneled piece. The artwork, Gosh explains, "is an abstract dreamscape where the urban and rural seamlessly collide. Green Mountains memories of my childhood merge with cityscape daydreams of an adultish life in Chicago as I reclaim Vermont as home once again. ... a nirvana, a dystopia, a somewhere-in-between."

In the Third Floor Gallery, Goldenberg's brilliant "Visual Jazz" pieces infuse the central space with energy, as his monotypes "Homage to the Earth" offer a contemplation of our planet.

"My paintings reflect my love for music — especially jazz and improvisation," says Goldenberg. "Their tempo, tone and color correlate perfectly to this music. Color, shape, texture, movement and rhythm build my artistic voice. My artwork are improvisations consisting of layered imagery, bold cutouts and compelling shapes. I call this style Visual Jazz."

For info: *The Times Argus*, Barre VT