

PREVIEW: Massachusetts

LOVE / LUST

Boston Sculptors Gallery • Boston, MA • bostonsculptors.com • February 8–26, 2017

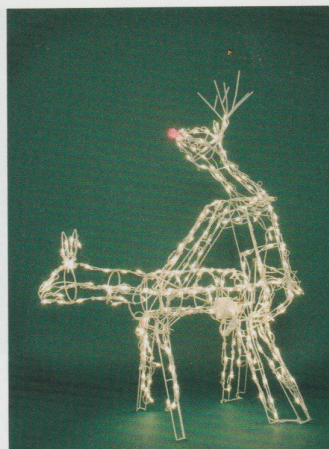
“Love” and “lust” wrangled to mixed reviews during this season’s political smash and grab. For those now looking to rosier times, members of Boston Sculptors Gallery say look again. “This is the anti-Valentine’s day show!” says Andrea Thompson, the mastermind behind the Gallery’s group show, *Love / Lust*. Comprised of almost 100 works by the 37 member artists in a variety of media, including felt, plaster and steel, the show eschews the “sugary trappings” of the holidays for something messier, more neurotic, and even, perhaps, transcendent.

Boston Sculptors Gallery operates as a working collective, molded on camaraderie and mutual responsibility. For Thompson, who used to build only what she could carry herself, being a member has given her the courage to take on bolder, large-scale installations. Returning to portable wares for *Love / Lust*, she will explore the overlapping languages of sex and religion through an edition of imaginary icons inspired

by Gian Lorenzo Bernini’s *The Ecstasy of Saint Teresa*.

The show’s “cash and carry” mandate (all works, starting from \$100, will be available for purchase) proved challenging for Christina Zwart, who tends to work with multiples (photos, pizza boxes, snowballs) to build large, macro/micro pieces: “I had to go small, which is hard for me.

Also, I didn’t have a thousand of anything that I could methodically and painstakingly arrange.” Zwart’s contribution to the show, *Steve & Alison*, is modeled on a photograph of a friend’s hands encircling her husband’s bare torso. The couple



Dennis Svoronos, *Reindeer Games*, 2016, steel, lights and motors, 40 x 13 x 45”.

agreed to replicate the pose while Zwart made the plaster mold – an arduous, intimate process that took well over an hour to cast.

New member Fafnir Adamites finds ways to embed meaning into his materials. His *Chaos Structures* will meld the unruly fibers of paper and felt into new surfaces of unpredictable pattern.

Dennis Svoronos’s nostalgic love of the holiday season, coupled with a contemporary distaste for consumer lust, led him to create

Reindeer Games, a motorized Rudolph and his Vixen copulating. “Contact and understanding between people are central to much of what I make,” says Svoronos. “Love is a definite component of that.”

—Cerys Wilson

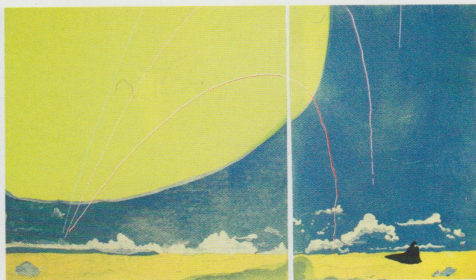
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ALLISON BIANCO: ATLANTIC TIME

Beard & Weil Galleries, Wheaton College • Norton, MA • wheatoncollege.edu/gallery • Through February 22, 2017

The sea is the central character in Allison Bianco’s *Atlantic Time*, a collection of intaglio and screen printed works inspired by the Rhode Island coastline and defined by the artist’s efforts to reconcile that present-day, real-life seascape with the more nebulous one that exists in her memories and imagination.

The Sinking of Matunuck is a panoramic triptych of the tiny beach community where Bianco spent her childhood summers. Here the meticulously etched landscape is augmented by the accidental nuances of the printing process itself; fingerprints become distant storm clouds, and wire brush marks become wisps of wind carrying flying



Allison Bianco, *Leave Your Troubles Behind*, 2015, intaglio and screen print, edition of 6, 18 x 32”. Courtesy of the artist and Cade Tompkins Projects.

debris across the sky. A screen-printed layer of glow-in-the-dark pink represents the real-life menace of rising sea levels that threaten to swallow the community whole, while the arc of a dayglow rainbow suggests a future much less grim.

Bright, screen-printed overlays also reimagine the landscape

in *Later that Day at Second Beach*, a series of six panels set on the cliffs in Middletown, RI. Here jagged, etched rocks and a bright orange sea sit below an aquatint sky punctuated by the loping arcs of pink fireworks. The scene looks backwards to Hiroshige’s *Fireworks over Ryogoku Bridge* but somehow feels more like a futuristic landscape from a distant planet.

Hiroshige’s influence is also present in *Leave Your Troubles Behind*, where a monolithic sun hovers over the Block Island shore. A googly-eyed sea creature is screen printed over the intaglio, hinting at the humor suggested by the piece’s title—a reference to the silly TV jingle used in commercials for the Block Island Ferry. Similar creatures appear from the dark waters in *The Old Jamestown Bridge* series, a set of three prints depicting the destruction of the rickety structure that used to connect Conanicut Island to the mainland.

Conanicut Island also features in *Pouring on Jamestown*, but here the main focus is the massive deep blue sea, etched with currents and dotted with white foam that the artist created by experimenting with whiting powder, which is typically used as a cleaning agent. Here, and elsewhere in *Atlantic Time*, it’s fitting that the ocean shares commonalities with the printing process itself. Both are rhythmic yet unpredictable, both full of surprises that occasionally wash up, disrupting the scenery.

—Elizabeth Lee