

ART

NEW ENGLAND

August/September 1999
Display until September 30, 1999
\$4.95 u.s./\$6.00 can

Twentieth Year

Federal Reserve Bank Gallery/Boston

The Cambridge Art Association
National Prize Show

Large juried shows are daunting to put together: this particular one had over 1,500 applicants, from which 191 artists were selected, to be represented by one work apiece. Emily Belz, the show coordinator, and her committee selected siblings Peter (senior vice-president of Sotheby's, New York), Eliza (chief curator, the Phillips Collection), and Belinda (an independent photography curator, author, and historian) Rathbone to jury this show. Every medium, and every level of competence—from the serious amateur to the mature professional with an articulate vision—is represented. The viewer samples visual appetizers and can only guess what it would be like to sit down to an entire meal prepared by each of these artists.

Drawing—so important a foundation in the visual arts, and so often a preliminary step in the artistic process—shines in Joe Bascom's *Brown Paper Bag Drawing # 105*, in which an academic exercise is carried out with obsessive precision, and in William A. Berry's *Still Life with Option*, in which precise grids of colored and graphite pencil lines delineate the forms of still-life objects on a tabletop with the illusionism of the halftone screen or the multiple scan lines of television.

Among the memorable paintings are Sara Crisp's *Untitled (Poppy)*, an image that emerges from encaustic depths only to be obscured by

translucent sheets of white mica, Christopher Gallego's *Interior with Three Rooms*, a luminous realistic painting full of the pastel tones of reflected light, and Mary Hughes's *Voyage*, a diptych showing a wooded path and a sky where glazing creates a dreamlike sense of softness. Jerry MacMichael's *Still Life with Thread Spools* depicts a beaver skull and a feather resting on piles of childrens' blocks, encompassing both extremes of life; Sandra Reed's *Low Houses Near the Tracks* captures heat and humidity in a working-class Southern neighborhood.

Printmaking is represented by Betsyann Duval's monotype *Lures #1*, where fish and fishing line dance across the surface, and Hiroko Lee's woodcut *Circling*, in which two large patterned kimonos seemingly float just under water. Karen Davis's gelatin silver print *The Louvre, Paris* is an ironic image of a marble wall, bathroom sink, and mirror amid some of the world's most memorable art. George Laumann's digital photograph *Montreal #1* is a seamless panorama of an urban wall of movie and show posters complete with pedestrians, and Lisa Sartorius's gelatin silver print *Spice* is a straightforward introspective image of a young teenage girl.

Engaging sculptural works include Emily Gibson's *Gender Etiquette*, a tea set of molded latex containing forms of fruit and vegetables that set up a sensual and a witty counterpoint, and Ho-Jeong Jeong's *Wave*, constructed of white porcelain and aqua-glazed stoneware, which evokes the stylized frothiness of waves in Japanese prints. Also notable are Jennifer Maestre's *Persephone*, inspired by the segmented bodies of sea urchins, Craig Schaffer's bronze *Growth Cycle*, fragmented circles reminiscent of seashells, lily pads, and the DNA helix, and Judith Block Solomon's stoneware *Canoe*, a small and haunting talisman.

—Rich McKown