

William Brayton: Artist Statement

William Brayton makes abstract sculpture and drawings. He is interested relationships implied by the ways parts meet and touch. In new sculpture, Brayton intertwines branching structures in bronze rod with bolted aluminum arcs. Spheres and discs mark endpoints that glow and reflect light. Three intertwined visual systems combine organic and industrial sources. Casters are sometimes used to upend the traditionally static presentation of sculpture. Implied motion animates the work as a whole.

In new wall sculpture wooden shapes are stacked to create deep reliefs and hidden “rooms.” Light activates the surface, while barriers and shadows mark the edges of inaccessible spaces. The palette is limited to black, white and the colors of local woods. Carbonizing with a torch yields numerous blacks based on different species and those metals drawn into the tree during its life. Different wood grains act as a kind of found drawing. They invert Braque’s use of faux wood grain in collage.

Drawings combine similar forms with saturated color in translucent and fluid environments. Water based spray paint and marker are paired with graphite, charcoal, ink and other traditional media to create a hybrid. Brayton sees drawing and sculpture as parallel practices, each influencing but not illustrating the other. In both media, the final form is found through chance combined with an improvisational building process.

William Brayton: Bio

William Brayton has exhibited extensively at the national level. His work has primarily been shown in public galleries, museums and sculpture parks including The Chesterwood Museum, The Mount, The Brattleboro Museum, and the Hudson River Museum. He has been awarded grants from the Pollock Krasner Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. William Brayton is professor emeritus of art at Hampshire College where he established the sculpture program and served as Dean of the School for Interdisciplinary Arts. He lives and works in Conway Massachusetts.