

RESILIENT TOGETHER

The Artist's Journey Through Liminal Space

August 6 - September 25 . 2021

FENIX GALLERY | Fayetteville . AR

White Memories Series #1 by Cindy Arsaga (c)
17.5" h x 21" w x 12" d - found objects with encaustic



With the self-imposed challenge of creating art with things she had been gathering for years, waiting for the objects to become a story was both a challenge and a delight for **Cindy Arsaga**. She built a series of cocoons out of various gathered objects, mounting them to found sticks. The cocoons were then bejeweled with artifacts from a past time. In *White Memories Series #1*, Arsaga captures the female rite of passage, truly a liminal space in time.

In *Unraveling*, **Pat Hennon** combines her personal experience as well as the collective extreme chaos of the times. Pursuing her own feelings of internal chaos, she found new levels

of deep grief. Watching the world fall apart, she suggests in her work a separation process between the two aspects of internal feminine and masculine energies into a fluid non binary relationship. In a sign of promise, they become peers, not opposites.

Homebound by Laurie Foster (c) - 72" h x 24" w - mixed media



Unraveling by Pat Hennon (c) - 48" h x 59.5" w - oil on board
photo by Meredith Mashburn

For **Laurie Foster**, the zoomorphic figures used in the mixed media installation *Homebound* relate to the most elemental of cultural storytelling traditions: the use of animals to represent human traits. Think Aesop's fables. Each individual room in the installation is complete in itself, but the sum of the parts creates the whole, the home. A peek inside each room offers a hint at those moments of intensity, the brief memories, the tapping on the shoulder of the

soul, our personal turning points. These intimate moments are all a function of "home."

To Want Nothing at All by Danielle Hatch (c)
3'h x 3'w x 3.5'd - mixed media (stucco, tile, concrete, wood, plaster)



Danielle Hatch used material from a recent home remodeling project--upholstery, tile, stucco and reclaimed wood--for her installation *To Want Nothing at All*. She seeks to render feminine lived experience in tactile ways, exploring womanhood as an identity constructed through narrative. The sculpture navigates an identity formed through the lens of knowledge and expectations passed from one generation to the next, connecting the body with the built environment.

gives shape to her ideas about patterns of movement or thought. Though fleeting and in flux, by using color and shape, her word clouds capture the meaning of that moment in time.

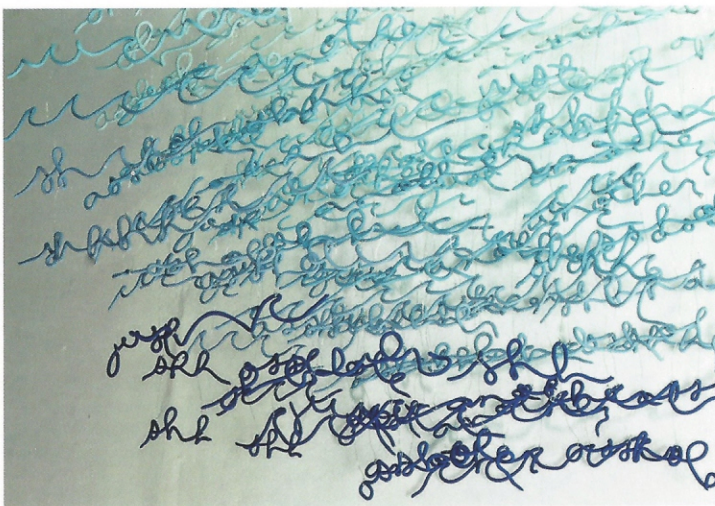
Martha Guirl-Phillips finds an artistic association in assembling objects that do not always have an immediate relationship. In her work *I'm Not Afraid to Know: Nature Morte* she symbolizes the ultimate need for acceptance and the process of surrender that

I'm Not Afraid to Know: Nature Morte by Martha Guirl-Phillips (c)
15'h x 15'w x 7'd - mixed media



moves us through liminal spaces. Unwound mainsprings will no longer hold kinetic energy able to track 24-hour days, the bird will no longer sing or fly, thorns no longer attached to tree branches can't provide protection. An ending, if embraced, can turn into a beginning.

Barbara Satterfield's *Bits of Sticks* installation celebrates the diversity of form and material found in often maligned and destroyed bag worm



Impostor Syndrome Lullaby (Detail) by Aimée Papazian (c)
24'h x 24'w - ceramic, wire

nests. A collector of "detritus" found in nature, she is inspired in this instance by the cumulative effect of the repetitive labor required to protect and birth the next generation: individualized cocoons covered in snippets gnawed from the host plant. While the actual nests turn gray, Satterfield expresses her admiration for the process through color.

In liminal space we cross a threshold that allows for transformation, the metamorphosis, the shedding, so new growth and change can happen. **Elizabeth Weber** explores the process of transmutation in the work *Transformation*. A tree's leaves fall in autumn to conserve energy through the cold winter. Daylight hours start to wane, a deer sheds its antlers. Insects find shelter and

Transformation by Elizabeth Weber (c) - 9" h x 14" w x 14" d - antler shed, leaf skeletons, snake skin shed, quail eggs, polymer clay - photo by George Chambers



Bits of Sticks: An Installation (Detail) by Barbara Satterfield (c) - 22" h x 9" w - ceramic, wire - entire installation dimensions: 10-12' h x 8' w x 5' d - photo by artist

feed on fallen leaves, leaving their skeletons behind. A snake finds a safe place to shed while it is blind and vulnerable, leaving its past behind. A bird finds the perfect nest in the discarded remains of all that came before.

Utilizing expressive brushwork and abstracted forms, **Dolores Justus'** nature-based work draws the viewer into visual landscapes

that are both familiar and new. In *Joy Slips In*, there is a sense of movement and passage into the light that calls us forward into greater companionship with ourselves, nature and each other. Through the suggestion of trees, the painting also touches on the idea of liminal space, providing a door that propels us from this moment to the next with joy.



Joy Slips In by Dolores Justus (c) - 30" h x 40" w oil on linen - photo by Cindy Mornchilov

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Cindy Arsaga

Laurie Foster

Danielle Hatch

Pat Hennon

Dolores Justus

Aimée Papazian

Martha Guirl-Phillips

Barbara Satterfield

Elizabeth Weber

In the winter of 2019, Cindy Arsaga, Laurie Foster, Danielle Hatch, Pat Hennon, Aimée Papazian and Martha Guirl-Phillips, six serious and committed artists from Northwest Arkansas, made the decision to become a working group. Inspired by the premise behind *PART TO WHOLE: The Making of Art, the Artist and the Artist Group*, a June 2019 exhibition at the Butler Center in Little Rock, they agreed to meet monthly to collectively strengthen one another in the practice of making work influenced by the mutual respect they held for one another. In a bow of acknowledgment to the founding group, the six artists who exhibited in *PART TO WHOLE* were invited to join the Northwest Arkansas group in the new exhibition; three of them were able to participate.

Meeting monthly in each other's unique studio spaces, the artists developed a deep understanding of their muses and influences. They shared the one piece of work they would not part with and the reasons why. Over time they developed a trust that allowed for a nudge in another direction, and often a much-needed affirmation. How would their work diverge from a place of comfort when ideas were meaningfully processed with a peer group? Could they create a single powerful voice, fusing together varied works, as a result of this deep connection they found within their group?

Looking back, it felt like providence when a few short months into this endeavor we all sheltered at home due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It seemed ironic that the artists in this group had consciously made the decision to move away from the isolation that is so common to how artists work. When the artists were able to reconvene in June, outside, distanced and masked, Martha Guirl-Phillips struck a nerve when she described our present existence: "We are living in liminal space, a transitory state of being. We stand on the edge of a threshold; we will be leaving one thing and someday will enter something entirely new," she said. But at the time, the group was in the ambiguity of liminality; wondering what would be learned and how that would be expressed.

Inspired by the idea of liminality, Cindy Arsaga focused on the theme of cocoons. "I learned that in a cocoon the interior being liquifies inside its walls, then reassembles and emerges as an entirely different creature," Arsaga noted. "This sounded about right to me, given the changes I was feeling and observing my fellow artistic travelers going through."

The post-vaccination gathering allowed for reflection, cast through the euphoria of resiliency, and a deep sense of gratitude for being a part of this group, which served as an anchor but with an unbound eye to the future. When the group came together to share the work, each artist experienced a palpable sense of energy, a recognition that each had gone beyond her own part to that place of a harmonious whole.

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