

# Sculpture

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## Dartmouth, MA

### "Just Wait and See"

University Art Gallery,  
University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth  
This installation, by Luca Buvoli, Dianna Frid,  
and Anton Vidokle, of fluttery, ephemeral  
works seems to have been blown into place  
by a fresh breeze. Sharing more than a play-  
ful, scrap-basket aesthetic, an affinity for  
sewing, and heat-transfer images borrowed  
from high and low culture, each artist embeds  
within their unassuming objects personal  
obsessions and musings of big ideas. These  
range from cultural myths to some of Western  
civilization's fundamental information sys-  
tems. Their blend of material and formal  
guilelessness, interlaced with an equally  
understated epistemological conceptualism  
comprises appealing objects of humble grace  
and gentle wit.

Anton Vidokle's intricate geometric con-  
structions of translucent white polyester  
fabric, stitched together with yellow thread,  
have the determined follow-through of a  
model-builder and the cheery colors, fresh  
delicacy, and traditional imagery that bring to  
mind nursery decor. Plastic tarpaulins in road-  
sign yellow enforce the idea of messy child-  
play when used as a mat for one of Vidokle's  
pale filmy constructions or as the ground for  
a gusset of elephant-figured polyester. His  
micro-detailed, exactly assembled works  
are marvels of patient tailoring skills that  
speak of macro-cosmological marvels, such  
as one-point perspective, orbital patterns, or  
mathematical models. One small untitled  
piece from 1996, a geodesic sphere of sewn-  
together polyester patches, neatly slumps on  
the floor like a deflated soccer ball, atop its  
small, casually folded, yellow tarp. Two little,

Dianna Frid, *Arcadia*, 1996. Cloth, display  
grass, thread, and heat transfer on cotton.  
60 x 76 x 2 in.

pointy fabric cones sprout, hornlike, from the  
sphere's top, as if Vidokle became obsessed  
with the solid construction possibilities of this  
geometric shape and just kept at it. *Sideshow*  
(1996), a flat, table-top-sized piece configured  
like a spider-web, lies directly on the floor.  
Its polyester shapes conjoin exactly, forming  
another impossibly minute, complex construc-  
tion at center. A parade of small blue heat-  
transfer animal silhouettes runs endlessly  
around the web's edge. Read from a hierarchi-  
cal point of view, these start with simple sin-  
gle-celled creatures and end with a human.  
Cracking his whip at the center of this web  
of life, however, is a large red monkey  
dressed ringmaster style.

Geometry and organic life are also embed-  
ded in Dianna Frid's fabric constructions.  
Similarly, she also plays with cultural hierar-  
chies and properties of perspective, along  
with mapping. *Arcadia* (1996) is a wall-hung  
piece of bright green cloth, its raw edges cut  
in a roughly triangular shape, minus the apex.  
Artificial grass is appliquéed inside the trian-  
gle, like a tiny hedge, in a precise pattern of  
a formal garden maze. The top dimensions of  
the maze follow the cloth's triangular shape,  
thus retreating into a straight-on, singular  
perspective with implied vanishing point. At  
lower right, like an afterthought, a cluster  
of bright scraps of fabric are loosely sewn  
together, totally out of linear sync. Heat  
transfer-printed on these are tiny maze-like  
images—various floor plans taken from  
museum brochures. Frid's casually constructed  
connection between order and chaos,  
between raw and random edges versus neat  
Cartesian systems and cultural hierarchies, is  
built into an object that causes viewers also  
to shift back and forth in perspective and  
scale. *Red Forest* (1996) is equally affecting

for its looping skeinlike construction made of  
hundreds of tiny, tatted-together cloth ovals,  
each of which is heat-transfer-printed with a  
red tree. "Hidden" in this homespun calico  
woods is a drift of little rifle-pointing men and  
forest animals, more heat-transfer images on  
connected bits of cloth.

Luca Buvoli's colorful swirls and trajectories  
of bits of refuse that comprise his fantasy  
anti-superhero contrails, seem almost impa-  
tient with Vidokle's and Frid's musing over big  
issues. Inspired by comic book characters that  
defy laws of man or nature, Buvoli's wispy  
constructions imply the action, not the figure,  
but action that is a pale parody of mythic  
might. "Nothing That Could Stop a Vision"  
(*Action Figure*) (1994), an assemblage of wire,  
bits of plastic, cloth and other things, clumsily  
pretends to fly through a gallery wall. "Can't  
You See That I am Burning?" (*Action Figure*)  
(1993), is a sketchy spiral of Plexiglas, wire,  
and reddish refuse hung from the ceiling.  
Several of Buvoli's homemade comic books  
hang nearby. These 1990's-era, slacker ver-  
sions of Walter Mitty just barely flesh out  
narratives implied by the constructions.  
Buvoli's hapless efforts are nonetheless  
endearing embodiments of a preoccupation  
with hopelessly unattainable ideals.

—Ann Wilson Lloyd

