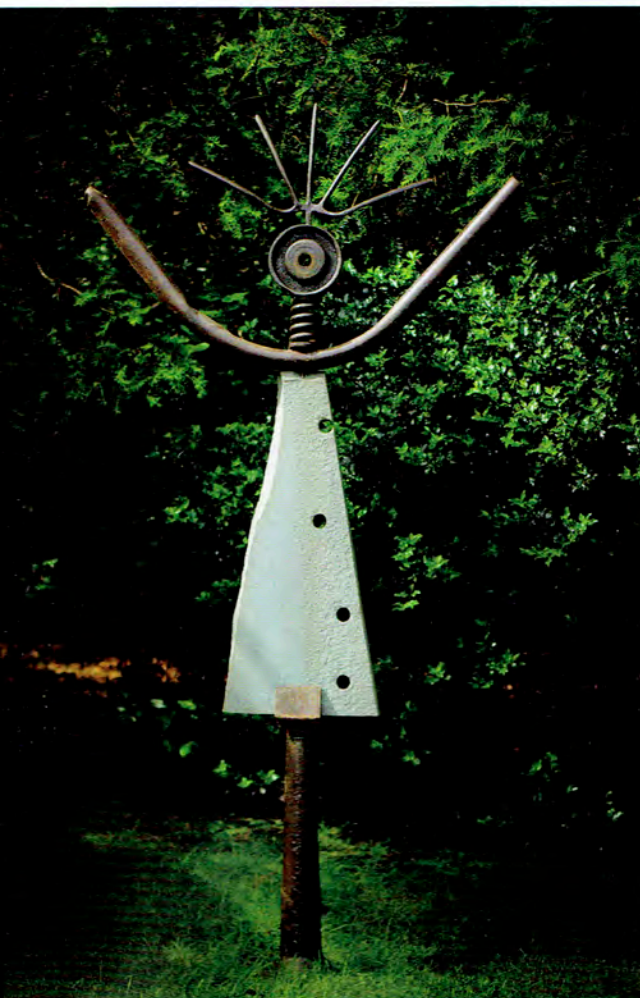


# SUMMER SCULPTURE SHOWCASE IN TOUCH ON CONNECTICUT'S SHORE



**STUDIO 80 +  
SCULPTURE  
GROUNDS**  
80-1 LYME STREET  
OLD LYME,  
CONNECTICUT

**THROUGH  
OCTOBER 27**

LEFT: Gints Grinbergs, *Girl with Dippity Doo*. Photograph by Christina Goldberg.

RIGHT: Lisa Simonds, *Silhouette*, 60". Photograph by Christina Goldberg.

Eye-catching sculpture allures, causing us to pause, linger, and dither as we contemplate what it's trying to say to us. It can be transformative, with both the object and its environs enhanced by its juxtaposition to its surroundings. Imagine strolling through an array of landscape sculptures blended seamlessly onto bucolic grounds flanked by a placid river, and you just may be transformed. The venue is the "Summer Sculpture Showcase" on Gil Boro's Sculpture Grounds in Old Lyme, Connecticut.

Situated halfway between Boston and New York, the Showcase features 21 works by 18 sculptors set on Boro's four-

and-a-half-acre estate in the heart of Old Lyme's historic village. Interspersed among more than 100 sculptures that are always displayed on the park-like grounds, the exhibit opened on the warm, sun-splashed evening of June 10 and will be in place through October 27.

Competition was keen, with 75 submissions, some from as far away as the West Coast. Entries were evaluated based on concept, execution, creative process, artistry and suitability to the landscape. Sculptors from New York, Pennsylvania, and Texas, as well as the New England states, are all represented.

Boro, a renowned sculptor in his

own right, said the show has multiple objectives. One is his desire to provide a venue for young and mid-career artists to display their work to a diverse audience. Strategic placement was a prime consideration when evaluating a piece. "I needed to have a sense of where the piece would go," Boro said, but it's a collaborative effort. "We work with them on the siting to see where their piece would fit best" to enhance, and be enhanced by, its surroundings.

But his real stimulus is to promote his conviction that art and viewer should be interactive. After being escorted out of the Museum of Modern Art in New

York for touching sculptures - twice! - Gil Boro was determined to create an environment where viewers would not only be permitted - but are encouraged - to touch sculptures. "I really think that three-dimensional art should be handled, touched, pushed and experi-

it's not confrontational, it's here to be interacted with. I want people to interact with art. I don't want it to be behind closed doors."

Simonds, from Mystic, Conn., has recently come back into the art world after several years working in home

ture Showcase is the perfect setting. "I wanted to place the work outside and let people see it who weren't seeking out galleries." Choosing a spot surrounded by trees on the bank of the Lieutenant River suits her sensibility with nature. "There's something reflective about the



Gints Grinbergs, *Stainless Globe*. Photograph by Christina Goldberg.



David Judelson, *Big Pablo*, wood, 10'. Photograph by Tom Soboleski.

enced in three dimensions," he said. "It's the only way you can understand it." Most sculptors in the Showcase accept this attitude.

Lisa Simonds' curvaceous figurine "Silueta" tempts the viewer to touch. Embodying femininity, the five-foot-tall statuette "is more about a presence," Simonds said. "I want people to come and discover it. It's tranquil, it's solitary,

remodeling and kitchen design. "All my creativity went into that," she said, "and this sculpture is an effort to reconnect with my creative side." She feels a calling "to create outdoor pieces using construction materials but making them feminine." "Silueta" is sculpted from three-quarter-inch marine plywood pieces glued and screwed together.

Simonds thinks the Summer Sculp-

piece being near the water; she has like a tranquil presence."

With three pieces selected for the Summer Sculpture Showcase, Gints Grinbergs of Dedham, Mass. is this year's featured artist. Drawing on his heritage and his ancestors, Grinbergs personifies the belief that almost anything can be reused and, with a little imagination, thought-provoking

creations assembled. His inspiration is drawn partially from his Latvian grandmother: "Use everything, waste nothing," she taught him. He calls it immigrant sensibility and practicality.

As a result, "I'm a bit of a packrat," he said. He accumulates stuff - found objects, tools, old farm or industrial equipment - and arranges it to form eclectic pieces like "Girl with Dippity Doo." Consisting of an old truck axle, a bent rusted pipe, a small steel wheel, a rusty car spring, and a broken scrap of bluestone, it's topped by a pitchfork whose tines spray out in different directions - depicting a bad hair day. The neck spring reminds him of cultures where women stretch their necks with stacks of coils (like the Kayan people of Myanmar, formerly Burma).

Grinbergs' Latvian ancestry is reflected in "Amulet," five-foot tubular strands of hanging steel shapes resembling a giant's necklace. Its inspiration, he says, is that "Ancient Latvian jewelry has something based on a crossbow. The full title is Crossbow Amulet."

Other sculptors in the Summer Sculpture Showcase explore themes of concealment and logic. "Reveal," a monumental metal zipper by Brooke Bofill of Long Island, considers the common object as a sexual icon, portraying its function to uncover and hide while splayed out half closed, half open, in a suggestive spread eagle position.

David Judelson's work mixes and joins a variety of materials to arrange basic shapes into geometric and abstract "assemblages," as he calls them. "Big Pablo," he says, "incorporates an historical inspiration, which is analytical cubism. It was constructed by building with planes. What I would call architectural intelligence. All my work is informed by my training in architecture."

The 10' abstract wood structure provokes the viewer to consider its identity and meaning. Upon seeing "Big Pablo," one person told Judelson that it looks like a Picasso head. "Which was totally unintentional," he said. He conceded, though, that "you can see an eye and a nose and a mouth."

Though Judelson said his works appear to come from "the logical

brain," his thought process while conceiving a piece is sometimes a bit "perverse," producing results with a sort of "perversity that counteracts logic," he said. "The thing about all of this is it's really arbitrary. The brain brings a level of order and logic but the logic is ultimately arbitrary as well."

The Sculpture Grounds site also includes a small gallery for indoor exhibits. Concurrent with the Sculpture Showcase is an exhibit of mixed media works of paper, textiles and recycled materials by New London artist Susan Hickman. Hickman is also a photographer and curator of the Hygienic Gallery in New London.

Boro's own engaging sculptures are in public and private spaces throughout the United States and Europe. Two pieces of his new series, "Narcissistic Trefoil," are also on display in this show. Comprising a maze of interlocking boxes and rectangles, each one has no beginning and no end. "It turns back on itself," Boro said. "It's a never-ending design."

The show is curated by Boro; photographer and web designer Christina Goldberg; and Barbara Zabel, professor emeritus of art history at Connecticut College. Goldberg said the idea for a large-scale sculpture show was spawned three years ago because "the grounds were starting to look sparse," after so many of Boro's works were being sold or loaned for exhibits around the country.

The Sculpture Grounds are a New England destination. Visitors are welcome to bring their own picnic to the patio. In addition to special exhibits, the permanent display consists of approximately 100 works. Now in its 13th year, the grounds hosts more than 4,500 visitors a year. It is open 9-5 daily, year-round, admission is free, and touching the sculptures is encouraged. For more information visit [sculpturegrounds.com](http://sculpturegrounds.com).

| Tom Soboleski

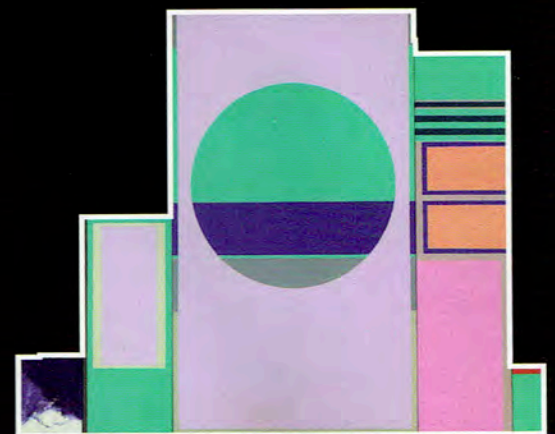
## BERTA WALKER GALLERIES



Selina Trieff (1934-2015), *Night Walk*, 1994, oil on canvas, 72 x 60"



Nancy Whorf (1930-2015), *Closed for the Season*, 1993, oil on panel, 36 x 72"



Budd Hopkins (1931-2011), *Orchid Alley*, 1976, acrylic on canvas, 48 x 59"

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