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'Paradigm' explores artistic flow

Beacon exhibit features group work

By Michelle J. Lee
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Think of it as a show that will launch new art ideas. When Beacon artist Karlos Carcamo curated "Flow: Navigating the Super Paradigm," he wanted to create an atmosphere which refers to the ever-expanding arts scene in New York. The show will also explore the vast "flow" of ideas among contemporary artists. "I didn't want to do a show around a theme ... I wanted to do a show that reflected the true nature of their practice, the way artists work, let them do what they do and not try to force any connections," he said. "I want it to be a true reflection of how they work."

Carcamo said inspiration came from articles in The Village Voice by art critic Jerry Saltz about his theory on a "super paradigm," the current art world in New York City. He also wanted to tie in the notion that the paradigm is large enough to include Hudson Valley artists, many of whom, like himself, moved away from the city for a better quality of life.

With the "super paradigm," Saltz wrote to "think of it as a giant sponge: bland on the outside, intricate within, it is extremely porous and permeable" and "absorbs everything." The exhibit reflects the theory with an eclectic group of paintings, sculptures and mixed-media works. This is the first show in Collaborative Concepts' new space in Bulldog Studios.

Evolution of work

In Eva Lee's work, "Transformation Scroll II," clusters of white dots and lines form worlds within worlds on paper, evoking both molecular designs and galaxies. Lee, who studied painting at Bard College and Hunter College, said that her art is influenced by science and spirituality and how the two converge. Her 18-foot scroll is "a reference to spiritual transformation and evolution," Lee said, with small shapes embedded into larger shapes. She also tried to play with the concept of time.

In "Spine," a 14-foot sculpture created by Beacon resident Susan Magnus, biodegradable shipping peanuts are connected with wire to resemble bones. Magnus, who moved from California last year, made the piece from packing material she used during her cross-country move. She created the piece for the show and believed it perfectly fit in with the exhibit's concept. "By definition, the word spine references anatomy, but also strength of character, courage or willpower, qualities that help sustain the creative process," she said. Magnus also said that participating in an exhibit organized by a fellow artist is intellectually stimulating. The emphasis, she said, is more on the conceptual underpinnings of the work rather than selling the artwork.

By having an artist organize the exhibition, different works can be placed side by side for interesting comparisons or contrasts. That artistic arrangement, in turn, could provide more energy and ideas to influence future projects.

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