

sculpture

January/February 2007
Vol. 26 No. 1

International Sculpture Center
www.sculpture.org



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Top: Barbara Andrus, *Three Spheres* (detail), 2001. Wood, twigs, branches, and string, approx. 8 x 10 ft. each. Above: David Bowen, *24 leaves* (detail), 2003. Aluminum, electronics, and leaves, 8 x 48 x 48 in.

initiated the transformation of the factory into a year-round facility for working sculptors. By 1976, with funding in place from state and local sources, Sculpture Space was up and running in the Federal Building,

with a mission to provide artists with space, equipment, and technical assistance. In its early years, Sculpture Space was primarily associated with artists working in metal. However, it now welcomes those working in a wide range of materials—a reflection of the changing times and the needs of artists today as they search for and respond to materials that mirror the contemporary world.

Once a prosperous center of textile mills, foundries, and breweries, Utica today is just awakening from a postwar decline. Sculpture Space has contributed to the spirit of rebirth and revival through its support of the city's cultural life. From its modest beginnings as a workspace for a small informal group of like-minded artists to a full-fledged residency program, Sculpture Space has enjoyed a distinctly symbiotic relationship with the community and its industrial past. There are public, quarterly work-in-progress

receptions, which enable visitors to engage in an intimate dialogue with contemporary art and its creators. Local cultural institutions frequently host exhibitions or installations by Sculpture Space residents and alumni. Artists often have opportunities to create site-specific installations in public spaces throughout the city, with the assistance of local businesses or government officials, and Utica's gritty urban setting continues to inspire many Sculpture Space alums long after their residencies have come to an end.

In return, Sculpture Space residents are generous with their knowledge and expertise, offering visiting student groups professional advice, hosting weekly open studios during the summer months for the Utica Monday Nite "culture crawl," and donating artwork to the organization's annual art auction, CHAIRity. In addition, resident artists support local merchants and businesses. From the beloved Doyle Hardware to Empire Recycling's enticing scrap yards, this rust-belt city yields a seemingly perpetual supply of raw materials and inspiration: Ray Neufeld, one of this year's artists, used cast iron bathtubs gathered in the area; Kate Chura incorporated used hosiery and bicycle tubing from local sources in *Baobab Pelt* (1995); Paula Toto Blake scavenged old inner tubes from Eggers Caryl & Corrigan, Inc., a commercial tire specialist, for *Shadow* (2006); and Georgina Batty found inspiration at the local laundromat in the form of lost socks for *Sock Flag* (2005). Utica's industrial past directly inspired a number of projects, including Linda Lee's *CIVIL WARS* (1992), made of cast-off silver teapots and pitchers from the nearby Oneida Silver company, and Roberly Bell's *Labor* (1993), an installation in an abandoned knitting factory, which included flowers collected from local funeral homes.

Site-specific work is encouraged, and in many cases, artists venture far beyond the walls of Sculpture Space. "Artists can consider the entire City of Utica as their studio," said Sculpture Space Director, Sydney Waller. With assistance from the staff and enthusiastic support from city officials, local businesses, and other arts institutions, resident artists are able to cut through the customary red-tape they would encounter in other cities and install their work in public places in record time. Waller cites Georgina Batty's roadside "graffiti," *CRISPSSSS* (2005), beneath a highway overpass and Caoimhghin O'Fraithile's *Long House* (2004) installed in the Utica train station. City Hall served as the site for Mark Ranis's *Christmas Tree* (1996), a large-scale installation for which he laboriously deconstructed and reconstructed a live tree donated by the Utica Parks Commission. Wang Po Shu tapped into the realm of the spiritual, placing seven small-scale cast manhole covers over tuning forks along a main street to align Utica's chakras. Masanori Nishimura paid gentle homage to nature with his installation *Relation* (2002). His open cubes, crafted from red Styrofoam insulation sheets, enclosed the upper branches of 30 trees in Butler Park across the street from the Sculpture Space property. As spring turned to summer, the foliage filled in and burst through the cage-like structures.

After 30 years of experience, Sculpture Space provides unsurpassed opportunities and resources for its residents. Twenty artists per year spend two months on site. Each receives a generous stipend of \$2,000 for expenses, supported in part by funding from