

The MASSACHUSETTS ENTERPRISE 1-14-11

'So Big!' Inspires Young & Old With Artistic Interpretations

By MARILYN J. ROWLAND

"So Big!" is big, bold, and colorful, offering large paintings and sculptures of expansive subjects, smaller representations of large concepts, and even small works of things that, at first, do not appear to be very big at all. It is all in the interpretation, and it is all very intriguing.

The show opened last Saturday at the Cotuit Center for the Arts. This fifth annual exhibit presented by the Arts Foundation of Cape Cod brings together the works of 47 emerging and established artists who live, work, teach, or exhibit their art on the Cape. The focus is on education and inspiration, and the show makes a special effort to engage children.

The paintings are hung at a child-friendly height, and a short description of the artists' thoughts about what "big" means in terms of his or her piece of art can be found next to the artwork. School art classes and their teachers are welcomed and given a docent-led tour, along with age-appropriate, hands-

on art workshops in the Art Barn, under the guidance of artist L. Michele Law and other Cotuit Center for the Arts staff. Some of the exhibiting artists will also stop by to address the students.

The arts foundation expects 1,500 students and a total of 4,000 people to experience the exhibit before it closes on February 12.

The arts center was packed last Saturday evening for the show's opening reception, despite the threatening weather. Rana Murphy, treasurer of the AFCC board of directors, and representing Eastern Bank, encouraged attendees to "let the art transport you wherever you want to go, in your heart, mind, and spirit."

The sea and its creatures were common themes, approached in different ways. There were also landscapes and seascapes portraying the grandeur of the world around us. Michael Rogovsky of Provincetown, for instance, expressed bigness with a 4-by-6-foot painting of Pilgrim Lake in Truro, at the entrance to

Provincetown. He has been mesmerized, he said, by this "calm, reflective, shimmering expanse of water" since he first saw it 40 years ago.

Other artists chose to focus on animals, large and small. Donna Claytor of Sandwich painted, in her words, "a silly, friendly, and perhaps female octopus." She included many different patterns and designs in her octopus to make it more fun to look at.

Yukimi Matsumoto of Sandwich and Isabel Green of Falmouth collaborated to produce a glass octopus holding a glass vase. Though the sculpture itself is only 8 by 8 inches, the octopus is too big to fit inside the vase to nest. Its puzzlement is reflected in the title of the piece, "When Did I Get So Big?"

Ms. Matsumoto and Ms. Green work together at the McDermott Glass Studio in Sandwich. Ms. Green had been making small sea creatures as paperweights, including a jelly-

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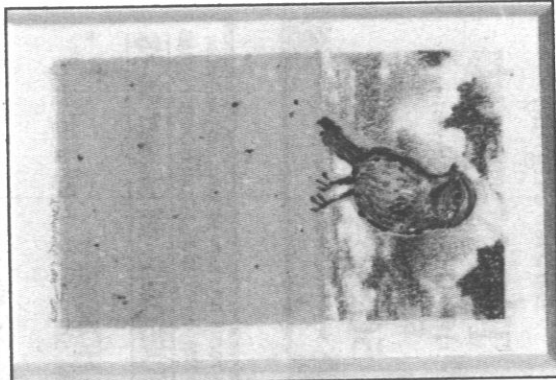
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h and sea turtles, while Ms. Matsumoto usually prefers to make sea creatures, thus this octopus holding a glass vase. Because glass is so difficult to work with—the glass has to be kept soft during the making of the piece—their octopus is one of the smaller works in the show, but it makes a big impact in terms of humor and artistry.

Ms. Law of Cotuit also created a small piece. Her monograph, "Sparrow's View," is 11 by 13 inches, and her subject is a tiny sparrow. That is "so big" about a tiny sparrow? Ms. Law said that the bird was based on a real sparrow in her back yard that would squawk at her every time she entered the yard. "He had no idea how big he was," said Ms. Law. "We are as big as we believe ourselves to be."

Alfred Glover of Bourne also expressed the concept of bigness through birds. His 10-foot-tall "Bird Totem" is a tree of fanciful birds, created in response to a client's request for representations of native birds of the Cape. Mr. Glover accepted the commission, but soon realized that the only native birds he knew were the ones that were "native to my imagination."

Some of his birds are recognizable. There is a woodpecker, a comical tufted titmouse, a blue jay, and a robin. There is also a yellow bird that could be, Mr. Glover said, either a canary or a chicken. A couple of them are striding in a determined fashion; he calls these his "super heroes."



MARILYN J. ROWLAND/ENTERPRISE
"Sparrow's View," by L. Michele Law.

minds him of a bird Picasso might have created. Now he wants to do a tree full of Picasso birds. Lee Weill of Cotuit had a different take on "big." Her "Circuitry Meltdown: I/O Error" is a 32-by-40-inch mixed-media piece, a mixture of traditional and digital printmaking. "It expresses," she said, "the capacity of the heart and soul to integrate computer circuitry imaging with images that are universal to the ideas of capacity."

"Computers handle so much information, almost infinite," similar to the universe, and the mind, she said. "The computer becomes another medium."

Tiffany Van Mooy of Falmouth took a hefty issue of the Sunday New York Times and rolled it tightly to create her three "Tree Rings." The different sections of the paper can be seen in the subtle hues and textures of the rings: the colorful graphics and advertising sections, the glossy magazine section, the black-and-white news sections. The tree rings are covered in real tree bark. The piece, Ms. Van Mooy said, is about recycling and the passage of time.

Ms. Van Mooy has used a variety of different types of paper for her tree rings, including children's artwork, Christmas cards, personal letters, reports, and phone books. It is a way, she said, of saving memories and making a statement returning paper products to nature.

Ned Sonntag of Harwich offered "Dimensia," a graphic novel image of a plus-sized woman. Mr. Sonntag enjoys the humor in his art, and this cover, he said, was "a

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