

Two ambitious installations displayed at 1078 Gallery

By JEANNE PLATT - The Buzz

Posted: 01/08/2009 12:00:00 AM PST

CHICO -- "It's deceptively simple looking," Sheri Simons said of her large-scale installation, "as is."

Simultaneously showing in the back of the 1078 Gallery is James Kuiper's sculpture, "Santiago's Arc: saving the landscape for plein air painters in a time of global warming and rising waters."

The exhibition runs through Jan. 31, with a reception from 5-7 p.m. Jan. 30 and an artists' talk at 6 p.m. Kuiper and Simons have taught art at Chico State University for 19 and 16 years, respectively.

Simons' piece dominates the main gallery space, a giant hanging structure created with islands of plywood blackened with piles of ominous powder -- an enormous, exploded lily pad that forces visitors to shuffle the room's perimeter.

"The piece comes from an ink-drop drawing that I made on rice paper, dropped from 18 inches above the surface -- not thinking too much about where I was dropping. When I thought that was complete, I gridded it off and I gridded off my wood, and I translated every edge onto the rice paper. (I) cut the wood pieces out with a router and rebuilt the whole drawing by hand in wood. There's lots of ways that it's a kind of absurd task," she said.

The mysterious dark dust is blood meal, a byproduct of slaughterhouses that is dried and then used as fertilizer.

"I was thinking of wanting the wood to be just a carrier or a surface, almost like a horizon that

carries other information. I didn't want to paint it. I didn't want it to become a canvas that became just another drawing. I like the idea of something piling up on it like a cruel snow," she said.

Meanwhile, Kuiper's gorgeous abstracted ship form, created with wood framing and river stones, calmly inhabits its space, with two wooden ribcages flanking the walls.

"James -- he's my muse," Simons said. "He's amazing. He's so funny and his attitude is really beautiful. I love ("Santiago's Arc"). I look at ("as is") as a drawing and his as a sculpture."

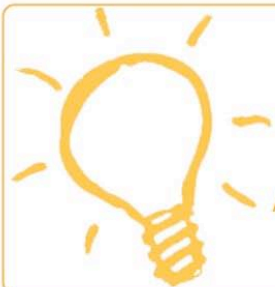
With her multimedia work, Simons aims, in the broadest sense, for collaboration and communication.

"I think of language a lot when I think of artmaking, that we have so many words available to us to get a semblance of exactitude, and yet there's so much space between what we say, what we mean, what they hear and what they understand. It's never even close to perfect. It's the gesture of wanting to communicate. It comes through in your intention. I look at artmaking in that way. To some extent, the image that we choose as a vehicle for communication might not be as important as we make it out to be," Simons said.

"I'm interested in preparing a moment. I hope that it's general enough and specific enough to carry someone out of that space and change just a little something for them, in terms of what happens to them after that. That that link expands the space of their thinking," she said.

On skepticism toward this line of work, Kuiper explained, "I think you have to dive in and believe in it. You have to be unrealistic enough to make art. It can be such incredibly time-consuming tasks. I can't

Advertisement



A bright idea in online advertising.

PrinterStitial® ads by Format Dynamics.



ChicoER.com

judge that. I have to keep doing it -- I have to really be in there."

Jeanne Platt can be contacted at jeanne.platt@gmail.com.

WHO: Sheri Simons and James Kuiper.

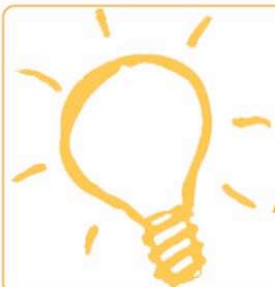
WHAT: Two art works.

WHEN: The exhibition runs through Jan. 31 with a reception Jan. 30. Gallery hours are from 12:30-5:30 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday.

WHERE: 1078 Gallery

ADMISSION: Free. Visit www.1078gallery.org or call 343-9473 for details.

Advertisement



A bright idea in online advertising.

PrinterStitial® ads by Format Dynamics.



Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™