EAF 06

SOCRATES SCULPTURE PARK
2006 EMERGING ARTIST FELLOWSHIP EXHIBITION
SEPTEMBER 10, 2006 – MARCH 4, 2007

ETHAN BRECKENRIDGE
MICHAEL CATALDI
RACHAEL CHAMPION
IAN COOPER
ROBERT DE SAINT PHALLE
MARTHA FRIEDMAN
CAMERON GAINER
HEATHER HART
NICHOLAS HERMAN
ANNAMARIE HO

CAL LANE
FABIENNE LASSEUR
STEPHANIE LEMPERT
MAMIKO OTSUBO
IAN PEDIGO
WILLIAM BRYAN PURCELL
RUDY SHEPHERD
HANK WILLIS THOMAS
TIM THYZEL
ANNA TSOUHLARAKIS

20th ANNIVERSARY • 2006
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INTRODUCTION

The 2006 Emerging Artist Fellowship Exhibition was presented on the occasion of Socrates Sculpture Park's 20th anniversary. This milestone was celebrated by doubling the normal number of fellowships and hosting twenty artists in the EAF Program. This year also marked the 10th anniversary of the EAF Program and, to date, over a hundred artists have participated in the Fellowship residencies and built work in the outdoor studio for exhibition in the Park.

The EAF Program is one of the best articulations of Socrates' founding commitment to support artists at a seminal stage in their career. For twenty years, Socrates has been committed to creating an environment where artists can work outside the parameters of a traditional studio space and exhibit their work in an open forum that makes their work accessible to a broad and diverse audience. For young artists in particular, this is both a unique opportunity to work in a collective studio space and a chance to build a community of peers that will continue to present new collaborations and opportunities as they expand their artistic practice.

To reach a pool of applicants that reflected the history of the Park's exhibition program, Socrates not only issued its annual open call for applications, but also reached out to the over 500 artists that have shown at the Park and asked them to nominate younger artists in whom they recognized great potential. This resulting exhibition honors all of our artist alumni while recognizing Socrates' remarkable history of supporting artists early in their development.

Increasing the number of Fellows this year has enlivened the Park during the past few months and has fostered a wonderful synergy between the artists that is evident in the spirit of the exhibition. This expansion of the EAF Program would not have been possible without the ongoing support of the funders who helped establish the program ten years ago – The New York Community Trust and the Jerome Foundation. Socrates is also grateful to our more recent partners – Altria Group, the Lily Auchincloss Foundation, the Elaine Dannheisser Foundation, and Starry Night Fund of the Tides Foundation. This year, the Park welcomes the EAF Program's newest benefactors – the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, Jennifer McSweeney and the Foundation for Contemporary Arts - and is grateful to Independence Community Foundation for allowing us to better inform our audiences about the works on exhibit. Substantial and sustained funding from these generous donors has had a significant influence on the remarkable history and continued development of the Emerging Artist Fellowship Program.
For Socrates Sculpture Park, twenty years represents the first chapter in the life of New York City’s largest outdoor art venue initiated by artists, and the time during which the Park has become a burgeoning visual arts institution with a curated exhibition series, full-fledged education program, and some of the best-attended outdoor cultural events in the city. In this window of time, Socrates’ institutional foundations have been laid – for instance, establishing the site that was once an illegal dumping ground as a city park – but it is not twenty-one, the official age of adulthood and legal responsibility. In twenty years of making art, an artist with professional ambitions would hope to transcend the category of emerging towards the unclear but more stately “established” status. As Socrates’ own status progresses from emerging to established, it maintains a level of flexibility rare for the white cube, and rarer still for institutionally endorsed public sculpture, which is often permanent and monumental. In spite of municipal ideals for public works, Socrates remains persistently open to new interpretations of sculpture and the mediums with which it overlaps.

The twenty artists in the 2006 Emerging Artist Fellowship Exhibition vary in background, conceptual focus, and their individual relationships to sculpture, which in some cases is tenuous. Realist sculpture still abounds, yet it appears more vividly than it may have twenty years ago – possibly because it is closer to the present moment – but also because it has become more common to use ephemeral materials than the traditional outdoor sculptural materials of metals, wood, and stone.

An unwieldy inquiry to be checked against the Park’s development is how sculpture has changed in twenty years. With sculpture being fundamentally borne out of studio practice, it is worth reflecting on artistic production on this plot of land at the end of Broadway, just west of Vernon Boulevard. Here, the first show in 1986 looked less like a show would look today, but held the excitement of reclamation of an urban wasteland, that has been a continuous point of reference for many communities associated with the Park: artistic, residential, and civic. To answer this question – how has sculpture changed in this place? – one can look to the 2006 Emerging Artist Fellowship Exhibition where traditional sculpture, installation, ephemeral works, and political projects converge.

Surely Cameron Gainer’s life-sized sculpture Forest Through The The Trees, depicting Bigfoot covered in plush but weatherproof fur is a more detailed and realistic rendering of the scientifically challenged Sasquatch than could be found at Socrates in 1986. As if transposed from a natural history museum, the mythological figure is integrated into the Park’s natural landscape. Covered in a similar grade of fake fur is Fabienne Lasserre’s Hair Tree, which takes the realist representation of fiction further. Less spectacular than Bigfoot, who has been constantly photographed with and by Park’s visitors like a tourist attraction, Lasserre’s tree is closer to a vision conjured by Dr. Seuss, except for its flawless installation which makes for a convincing mutant tree with hair. These two projects indicate that the boundaries between science museum (albeit fictional) and sculpture park have begun to erode in the 21st Century.

Referencing a later Modernist construct is Mamiko Otsubo’s untitled vitrine cum model house installed against the Manhattan skyline, mimicking the revival of Modernist design advanced by real estate developers on both sides of the East River. Real estate itself might be the most significant driving force changing the course of artistic production, yet the effect of the museum – an institution that has thrived in the last fifteen years through prominent redesign and expansion – is present in the Park. Hank Willis Thomas’ It’s about time is an enlargement of a piece he produced in 2005 for a show paying homage to the Black Power movement. In the Park, the photographic sculpture is designed as a sundial corresponding to plaques commemorating historic moments in the commodification
of African American history. The timeline as an educational trope, with bronze plaques, pushes the limits of the Park as a museological frame.

Surprisingly durable is Heather Hart's installation Color was given me as a gage, consisting of crocheted rope "cozies" that highlight permanent and functional details of the Park: its fence along the waterfront and several benches. With the intention of commenting on race, Hart's decorative gestures give these structures comfort, something that can be shared amongst any of the Park's visitors, regardless of cultural identification.

Merging relational aesthetics with museum display, Anna Tsouhlarakis' socially engaged Stalks of Beans and other stories succeeds in bringing different voices into the artistic field with an assemblage of objects laid out and exposed to the transformative winter months. Also along the lines of social sculpture and relational aesthetics, are works by Michael Cataldi and William Bryan Purcell, who approach the Park's social context quite differently. Purcell's playful WBP Mountain Man at Socrates Sculpture Park conjures a fantastic version of a visitors' center gift shop one might find in a national park, while his performance as the Mountain Man selling his wares parodies smaller, local museums where craft is as highly regarded as contemporary art objects. Cataldi's Urban Plaza Equivalent vacillates between function as a dry rest stop and wetting those seated on its benches with its intermittent fountain cooling system built from crude construction materials. This interpretation of the ubiquitous fountain and bench formation located in public plazas around the world pushes the idea of function over form, yet Urban Plaza Equivalent creates its own aesthetic value through a clever and economical use of readily available building supplies like sandbags and oil drums.

These attempts to display contemporary art in an outdoor, public place raise important questions about sculpture - here in the Park and elsewhere - and the crooked line that makes up an emerging artist's career trajectory. Whereas in 1986, setting up a space for sculpture on a disused plot of land was a radical turn away from the lack of support for large-scale sculpture, the criticality of today's emerging artists can be found within the smaller works on view. Addressing pseudo-science, race, the economy of artmaking, cultural history, and the constructs of social exchange, these sculptors' projects have the potential to register within an institutional setting more easily than the large-scale sculpture of yore. Why not stick to the museum as a place where vitrines won't leak, and bronze plaques won't corrode with seasonal climate changes? It is no longer enough to choose one context over another. One must operate outside the white cube in order to develop a critical position in relation to institutional framing of contemporary art. In any case, to many of the Park's visitors, Socrates is known as the museum on Broadway and Vernon Boulevard.
Existing between sculpture and architecture, this piece creates a linear, three dimensional passage in the form of a velodrome. Its intertwined shape, and rhythms of vertical and horizontal bracing, give this structure a sense of continuous motion.
Derived from seating arrangements in public spaces and plazas associated with commercial buildings in Manhattan, these four bench/planter structures are created from common construction and industrial materials. Rather than cultivating ornamental flowers and vines, these sculptures host weeds and indigenous plants, usurping urban public planning models by using the vernacular of construction sites and abandoned lots.
This fantastical, miniaturized industrial cityscape of implied utility has been situated among the trees to emphasize the sense of time's passing. This whimsical construction of salvaged materials speaks to the increasing number of dormant factories and production facilities.
Based on Lucy’s psychiatric stand in the Charles Schultz Peanuts comic strip, this sculpture re-contextualizes, repurposes and adds a third dimension to a familiar icon. Here, the doctor is always “out” making us acutely aware of the absence of a human presence.
This sculpture references the proliferation of the invasive plant called Kudzu. The artist has created a scene in which fake foliage—its unnatural color even more evident as the summer months give way to a contrasting winter landscape—has overtaken and camouflaged an architectural pedestal and figurative monument.

Robert de Saint Phalle received a 2006 Elaine and Werner Dannheisser Emerging Artist Fellowship.
An artist who has often dealt with precarious placement and balance in her previous works, Friedman has created a Brancusi-like column of oversized, rubberized eggs that perch one on top of the other in a seemingly impossible acrobatic composition.
Using traditional taxidermy techniques, this sculpture recreates, and makes life-size, a famous still from the 1976 film depicting the mythic Bigfoot as it stares back at the viewer while striding into the woods.
HEATHER HART

Color was given me as a gage, 2006

With this installation, the artist has transformed two benches, a section of the Park’s waterfront railing and a portion of a retaining wall with a crocheted covering that alters our perception of these structures. Dressed in this way, the familiar Park architecture becomes softened, cozy, and stripped of its utilitarian identity allowing it to take on new and unexpected associations.
A study in the historical, cultural and religious roles that iconic rocks play in a myriad of places around the world, this is a cast from an actual boulder that has been chromed using a process more commonly associated with cheap plastic toys. Assembled in parts, this geological monument is clearly a fabricated simulation yet has achieved an elusive symbolism—equally man-made, meteoric and earthly.
Inspired by cold war era espionage, the artist has created a tree trunk and a series of rocks that are imbedded with the trappings of high tech transmission, surveillance and recording devices and secreted away in the natural landscape of the Park.
Three decommissioned garbage dumpsters have been profoundly altered by meticulous craftsmanship creating the unlikely and surprising combination of urban industrial waste containers and upscale domestic perimeter fencing.
Hair is a richly imbued material in mythology, popular culture and literature and, in this installation, it is a truly surreal addition to the landscape. Both eerie and alluring, this tree becomes a highly poetic metaphor for the merging of femininity and nature.
These observation scopes provide fixed views of the East River and the Manhattan skyline in which the water is overlaid with letters from the many alphabets that are used in the over 167 languages of New York City. Addressing issues of immigration, assimilation and the remarkable diversity of this city, the artist has made the East River a symbol of multilingual communication.
With references to modernist architecture and design, and a series of the artists' signature and carefully placed singular components, this sculpture is both a very accomplished formal composition and a comment on waterfront development and the highly valued residential housing market of New York City.

Mamiko Otsubo received a 2006 Elaine and Werner Dannheisser Emerging Artist Fellowship
Developed as a sculptural collage of wood, paint and paper, this is an assembled environment that implies a structure in ruins whose prior function is now lost. This piece can be seen as a three-dimensional sketch that references both the actual and fictional history of the materials.
Part of an ongoing series of works that explore themes of masculinity, this is a memorial to an inherently flawed archetype of American manhood that is modeled on road side attractions that might lure tourists for a photo opportunity.

This gift shop was employed as a companion to the giant stump serving as a performance space and commercial venue for the marketing of T-shirts and miniatures. When activated, the artist would attend the booth in his pink mountain man outfit playing the character that has inspired the monument.
Based on the forms made by termites in Africa, Australia and South America, this sculptural device was created as a spiritual cleanser meant to absorb and then purify negative energy. Inspired by the artist’s desire to make a stable, peaceful, calm atmosphere, this sculpture is a monument to harmonious living.
It's About Time is a functioning sundial that examines the changing meaning of the 'Black Power' fist – here depicted in an Armani suit wearing a Gucci watch. The artist is exploring the legacy of the 1960s struggle for economic, civic and social equality and how it has been translated by the Me, X and Y generations.
Cast from their source materials, these accumulations of soda bottles, laundry detergent containers and other disposable liquid vessels, are transformed into colorful, crystalline forms that appear as water-born life washed up on the shores of the East River.
EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

ETHAN BRECKENRIDGE
Returning Videos, 2006
Wood
16' x 48' x 24'

MICHAEL CATALDI
Urban Plaza Equivalent, 2006
Sandbags, oil drums, wood, chain link fencing, weeds
Dimensions variable

RACHAEL CHAMPION
Old Growth, 2006
Mixed media
Dimensions variable

IAN COOPER
Doctor is Out, 2006
Steel, screen print on MDO and acrylic mirror, enamel, hardware
7'5" x 7' x 7'

ROBERT DE SAINT PHALLE
Momentum, 2006
Wood, fabric, plastic, steel, enamel
15' x 10' x 10'

MARTHA FRIEDMAN
Laid, 2006
Rubber
9'2" x 2'7" x 22"

CAMERON GAINER
Forest Through The The Trees, 2006
Steel, fiberglass, epoxy, faux fur, glass
6'10" x 2'10" x 4'3"

HEATHER HART
Color was given me as a gage, 2006
(From the poem I Am Not Proud by Helene Johnson)
Rope
93. 000'

NICHOLAS HERMAN
Differentiation and Correlation of Revelation, 2006
Metallic FGR
5' x 5' x 5'

ANNAMARIE HO
Untitled (Spy Rocks) & Untitled (Spy Stump), 2006
Polyurethane, various electronic devices
Dimensions variable
Various locations throughout the Park

CAL LANE
Gated Communities, 2006
3 Flame-cut & plasma-cut steel dumpsters
6' x 14'3" x 7'8"; 4' x 4'2" x 3'10"; 4' x 2'6" x 5'

FABIENNE LASSEUR
Hair Tree, 2006
Synthetic hair
Dimensions variable

STEPHANIE LEMPERT
The Scope of Language, 2006
Steel, aluminum, plexiglas, text
5'7" x 30' x 2'6"

MAMIKO OTSUBO
Untitled, 2006
Steel, concrete, plexiglas, vinyl juggling ball, miniature Vitra chair, paint
5'6" x 7'11" x 17"

IAN PEDIGO
At the End Beginning of the Day, 2006
Wood, paint, found materials
Dimensions variable

WILLIAM BRYAN PURCELL
Last Man Standing, 2006
Steel, cement, paint
13' x 10' x 10'

WBP Mountain Man at Socrates Sculpture Park, 2006
Wood, paint
10' x 10' x 10'

RUDY SHEPHERD
Black Rock Negative Energy Absorber, 2006
Concrete, amethyst, mica
18' x 8' x 8'

HANK WILLIS THOMAS
It's about time, 2006
Vinyl, aluminum, mixed media
Dimensions variable

The Truth is I Am You, 2006
2 Helium balloons
Dimensions variable

TIM THYZEL
Bottleites, 2006
Painted FGR-95 casts
Dimensions variable

ANNA TSOUHLARAKIS
Stalks of Beans and other stories, 2006
Mixed media
Dimensions variable
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