



"Parched Earth" by John Hodgson

PROVIDED PHOTO



"Awakening" by Frieda Post

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"Returning to Earth" by Wendy Copp

VISUAL ART REVIEW

Vermont is ArtFULL

By VICTORIA CRAIN
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

The Compass Music and Art Center of Brandon is currently hosting a group art exhibit, featuring 14 Vermont artists. The work is diverse, but earthbound in its focus. Edna Sutton, co-founder of Compass and curator of the exhibit, traveled through the state and invited artists to participate whose work was close to the natural world. She calls the collection, "ArtFULL Vermont."

First, a bit about Compass. Compass celebrates music and the creative

arts through regular art exhibits by regional artists, music performances, programs, workshops and more. In the large building, visitors may talk with artisans while they work in their studios and browse specialty stores, the bookshop and the classical music store.

In addition, visitors can retrace the history of recorded sound in the Phonograph Rooms exhibit. The building that houses Compass was once the infirmary of the Brandon Training Center, and the exhibit space appears to have been a cafeteria.

■ COMPASS MUSIC AND ARTS CENTER

Compass Music and Arts Center presents "ArtFULL Vermont," through Nov. 2, at 333 Jones Dr., Brandon. Hours are: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily; call 802-247-4295, www.cmacvt.org.

That said, this exhibit is presented in a way that makes the best of the largest room. The work is hung on moveable walls through the center of the room,

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creating a kind of garden of art through which a visitor can meander.

The show greets visitors in the corridor with a motion-filled hanging by Susan Raber Bray. Its ink drawings float like prayer flags on a breeze, and she used clay to make her fetching sculptures of birds and goats.

The centerpiece of the exhibit within the gallery is a sculptural garment fabricated by Wendy Copp of dried plant materials. The pieces represent the abundant resources in a particular locale and reflect her thoughts about the relationship of humans to natural processes.

A group show of this scope is difficult to describe. Suffice to say that everything works with everything else. The large classical collection of "Gourds as Fine Art" by John Hodgson is represented here, and sings a duet with Copp's large piece.

In this exhibit, you'll find burled wood

bowls, clay sculptures of birds and contemporary vases all collaborating. Pictorially, you will see the dark reminiscent landscape paintings of John Rivers and for contrast the wildly colorful abstract watercolors of Frieda Post. Stephanie Whitney-Payne contributes her peaceful botanical watercolor paintings.

Two photographers have added their comments on the natural world: Marilyn Maddison and Diane Gabriel. Other artists who join the exhibit are Sharon Lefebvre, Cristina Pellechio, Jeremy Ayers, Ben Barlow, Torrey Carroll Smith and Janet Van Fleet.

Curator Edna Sutton says that the exhibit space has a number of uses, including music performances and dance. When there is an exhibit of art, she tries to create a loft-like feel in the setting with the portable wall surfaces. It makes for an intimate show with surprises around each corner.

This show is moody: celebrating summer in some cases, remembering that autumn is on the way, always contemplating the natural process of life, demise ... and rebirth as art.