

SECTION 2

Provocative Art in Waterfront Show's Window

BY STEVEN BERNSTEIN

The Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition (BWAC) was founded in 1979 to "further develop the art community in The Brooklyn Waterfront Area." It is currently presenting its tenth anniversary show, a comprehensive exhibit which opened May 6-7 and features the works of over 100 artists. The array comes in a variety of art forms: an exhibit of drawings, paintings and sculpture on Jay Street, open studio tours, a window display at One Main St., and an outdoor sculpture show. The program also includes an exhibit of childrens art, a number of "open studio" exhibitions, poetry, film and dance.

The 68 Jay Street exhibition contains a diverse mixture of paintings, sculptures and drawings which are divided between two large rooms. Works range in style and temperament; some are representational, others abstract. Eclectic is perhaps the best word to describe the selection of work, indeed much of the work itself.

A few blocks away in Empire-Fulton Ferry State Park on the East River waterfront is the seventh annual Outdoor Sculpture Show where are gathered a number of highly imaginative pieces, some wood, others steel, all reflective of a unique sensibility. Set on a wide expanse of grass and overlooking the Brooklyn Bridge, circumstances for viewing the exhibit are ideal. This display continues through June 18.

Not far from the sculpture exhibit on Main Street is the "Window Show" which will run through June 30. Here are the works of five artists (four women, one man) whose pieces are set within the sandy, barren ground-floor interior of a commercial building space that has yet to undergo renovation. The sculptures which ideally should be seen at night (through the large windows) are illuminated by hidden lighting apparatuses. If you are thinking of Christmas and Fifth Avenue, you have the right idea. Much of the work at the window show exhibits an organic sensibility. The space itself with its sandy, gravel-strewn



The view inside the window at One Main Street. Left is work of Laurie Lea, punctuated strips of metal lit by red and white tubes of neon. The two large figures, right, are by Deborah Master. (Phoenix/Sullivan Photo)

The idea of a nest — a place to go — particularly as it pertains to the human world (eg. the family, as nest) is an idea that intrigues Clark. In today's socio-economic world, nest "lessness" may be synonymous with homelessness.

The nest itself which rests against the brick wall is surrounded curiously enough, by mounds of peppercorn which are arranged in a triangular fashion and which remind one of desert dunes. Here the repetition of the standing birches contrasts with the repetition of mounds as the triangular shape of the nest is echoed in the peppercorn com-

or a boardwalk at a beach. The plank serves the two-fold function of setting the figures apart from the similarly colored ground and providing stability for their heavy forms.

When seen from the front windows, these figures are positioned in such a way that suggests dissension of some sort; one faces us, the others back is to us, perhaps in a gesture of defiance. Neither the nature of their interaction nor their relationship are fully revealed although there is a distinct feeling of intimacy between them.

The figures are made of hydrocal plaster

human figure. It consists of a sparse metal frame or "body" around which and in which are wrapped wires, strips of metal and various tinkertoy like shapes that resemble D.N.A. molecules. If we were to extend the human analogy — and I think we should — there are punctuated strips of metal which when wrapped inside the body look like intestine. There are also red and white tubes of gas which suggest blood moving through veins. Surely the emphasis is on movement and vitality for this humanoid seems to exude life of its own.

The figure should be seen in relation to

show exhibits an organic sensibility. The space itself with its sandy, gravel ridden floor, and brick walls lends itself to this theme of nature.

Ursula Clark's piece deals most explicitly with the theme of organic life since its constituent materials are all from nature. Her sculpture, "Wall Nest" consists of a series of tall brick "rods" leaning against a brick wall. In opposition to these essentially vertical poles is another series of poles each of which lies in between each of the others. Inside this tent-like arrangement is a bundle of twigs and branches. What we have, in effect, is a nest, a rather large one at that.

of the nest is echoed in the peppercorn composition.

"Wall Nest" is a piece that is "sight-specific"; it relies, in some way, upon the space that it inhabits. That's seen in the way the birch rods depend on both the wall and the sand for their support.

In organizing the window show, Clark and Lea attempted to provide a "column" or area for each of the five pieces. Set in the middle "column" is one of the more dramatic pieces in the show. Deborah Master's sculpture features two huge women standing atop a blond wooden plank that reminds one of a summer-house porch

receding or intimacy between them. The figures are made of hydrocal plaster and because of their monumental size, anatomical disproportion, and somewhat forlorn (pensive?) expressions resemble many of Picasso's female figures. Their strong sense of frontality and verticality also give them an obvious Egyptian feel which when seen in relation to the modern walk forms an interesting contrast.

In the same way that Master's figures dominate their space so does Laure Len's sculpture which actually consists of three different parts. In the foreground (what is the foreground if seen from the front windows) is what may loosely be called a

The figure should be seen in relation to the two tall, cylindrical structures behind it, the first of which contains the remnants of a neon figure, the other nothing. The three part sculpture which is called "Don't Look Back" is in fact meant to depict Lot's wife's transformation into a pillar of salt, hence the cylinders. Relying heavily on fiber optics and neons the piece also reveals Lea's interest in light and man's manipulation of it.

Blending abstraction and minimalism, Bill Barrett's piece is among the less organic pieces in the show in that it does

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