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Maxwell Van Pelt's "Forager (ode to scarpa)," mixed media on paper. PHOTO SUBMITTED

By Keith Powers Contributing Writer

Posted Sep. 22, 2016 at 2:01 AM

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Bold-and-expressive can cancel out delicate-andnuanced, or complement it perfectly.

In the current exhibition at Grimshaw-Gudewicz Art Gallery on the campus of Bristol Community College, Catherine Bertulli's explosive sculptural

canvases dramatically attract, but Maxwell van ated wire installations state as effectively.

> own canvases in advance of Evolving from her earlier painter, in this installation strial aluminum foil surfaces, polyurethanes them.

ure, color and sculptural " extends out from the wall, d-alone pieces, exists on its f the room. Those two vertical L6" and "Beam," dominate the

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"Beam" demands the viewer's attention. Seeming Maxwell Van Pelt's "Forager (ode to scarpa)," mixed media on paper PHOTO SUBMITTED up to, the gallery's skylight window, it curves seductively, leaning high above against the sill. The "pose" is both vulnerable and threatening at the same time. The three seven-foot-tall bright gold sentinels of "Bozzetti 2016" stand guard nearby.









Along the walls, Bertulli's other works — 10 in all — extend out into space. Color is everywhere; gold frequently, but blues, magentas and darker tones as well. The folded aluminum foil creates an almost talking canvas, and the colors and

gloss applied to it deepen the conversation.

Multiple works build circular patterns, some extending forward at the center like breasts. All are evocatively titled: "Sith," Juggernaut," "Bogish" — but mostly leave the viewer to create allusions. Two works entitled "Eva" pay tribute to the brief career of sculptor Eva Hesse, whose work in alternate materials and minimalistic styles in the 1960s influenced many artists.

Maxwell van Pelt shows about two dozen works, wire-and-wood sculptures, and colored drawings with a similar aesthetic. Where Bertulli shouts, van Pelt whispers. Both get heard.

Invoking [sculptor Alexander] Calder gives an idea of what van Pelt's sculptures look like, but the works create a much different atmosphere than Calder's antic mobiles and stabiles. It's not that they seem more serious, just more intentional.

Most of the "sculptures" hang on the wall — or rather, emerge from the surface. The delicate shadows that the works cast on the white wall also form part of the installation.

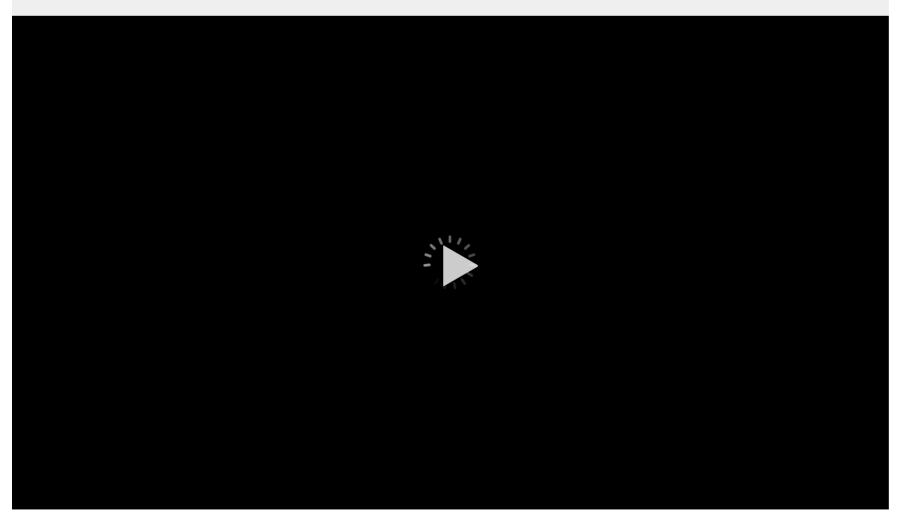
Although they are deliberately fabricated from wood, wires, yarn, and plastic, they could just as easily been drawn by hand (the drawings that accompany the sculptures emphasize that point.)

In his materials list for each of the sculptures, van Pelt lists "music" along with wire, yarn, and the others. He undoubtedly means musical wire, like guitar or violin strings, but the allusion is telling. Swirling, occupying space, and following line, these works are quite lyrical.

Van Pelt's delicate effect is mesmerizing, faint (the sculptures are barely visible from the opposite side of the small gallery), but articulate. The juxtaposition of the two artists makes for an intriguing show of alternate but energetic approaches.

Works by Catherine Bertulli and Maxwell van Pelt are on view through Oct. 13 at the Grimshaw-Gudewicz Art Gallery, 777 Elsbree St., Fall River. For more information, visit www.bristolcc.edu/gallery or call 508-678-2811.

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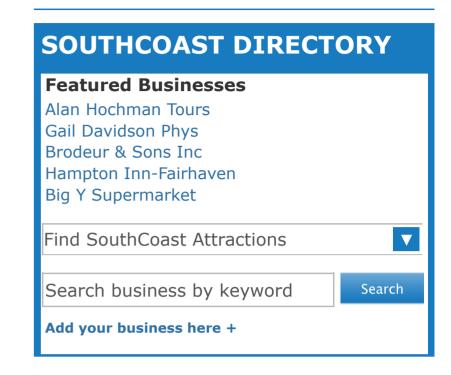
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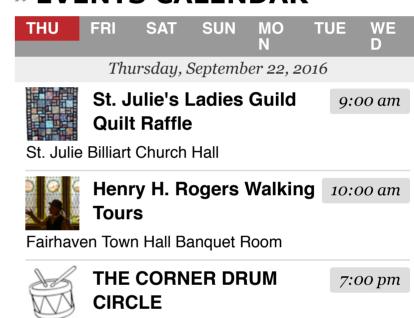
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