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# Art that explores time

We measure time in so many ways. One meaningful way is through objects: An heirloom evokes ancestors. A stack of letters recalls a friendship. An unused toy-box brings back a childhood. Three artists exhibiting now in the Cultural Center at Rocky Neck take the hoarded past and revitalize it. "Time Matters: Three..."

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Fabric creations by Michele Fandel Bonner, structures created from books by Conny Goelz-Schmitt and large polypropylene prints mounted under Plexiglas by Kathleen Gerdon Archer make the 'Time Matters' exhibit at the Cultural Center at Rocky Neck in Gloucester. COURTESY PHOTO

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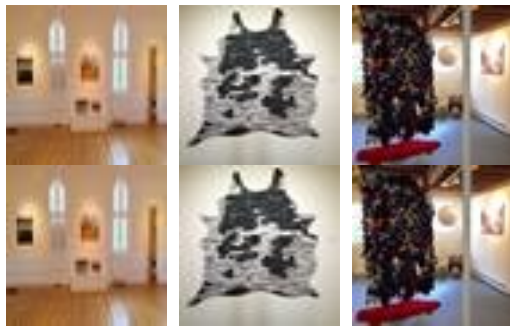
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Fabric creations by Michele Fandel Bonner, structures created from books by Conny Goelz-Schmitt and large polypropylene prints mounted under Plexiglas by Kathleen Gerdon Archer make the 'Time Matters' exhibit at the Cultural Center at Rocky Neck in Gloucester. COURTESY PHOTO



**By Keith Powers / Correspondent**

Posted Jun. 8, 2016 at 5:40 PM

GLOUCESTER

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**If you go...**

**WHAT:** Time Matters: Three Explorations

**WHERE:** Cultural Center at Rocky Neck, 6 Wonson St., Gloucester

**WHEN:** through July 4

**ADMISSION:** Free. Visit

[www.rockyneckartcolony.org](http://www.rockyneckartcolony.org) or call 978-515-7004

We measure time in so many ways. One meaningful way is through objects: An heirloom evokes ancestors. A stack of letters recalls a friendship. An unused toy-box brings back a childhood.

Three artists exhibiting now in the Cultural Center at Rocky Neck take the hoarded past and revitalize it. "Time Matters: Three Explorations," on view now through July 4, shows the wildly divergent approaches that Conny Goelz-Schmitt, Michele Fandel Bonner and Kathleen Gerdon Archer use to remember and transform.

Archer shows about a dozen large, abstract photos, color close-ups in high-gloss. Polypropylene prints mounted under plexiglas, at first glance they show the remarkable details of some abstract frozen object. Turns out they are family relics, placed in the freezer and then photographed at close range until something interesting reveals itself to the artist. The photographs are strikingly alluring, bringing in the viewer with mystical energy.

Schmitt re-invents books. Spines torn, covers obscured, her remaindered literature becomes an anonymous architecture of unexplained ideas. The books, used simply for their texture and shape, become the medium. Some are disassembled into collage. Some are stacked and glued into totems, or arranged into assemblages. They no longer tell stories with words, but through soft colors and manipulated formations.

In Schmitt's work, it's interesting to find that the medium itself carries meaning. You could never

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claim that acrylic, or bronze, or oil or clay has meaning to itself — but of course they all become tools for art. But using old books as sculptural entities forces them into a muffled discourse — the materials take the artist’s intended shape, but also speak on their own as discarded signifiers.

Bonner’s compulsions become humorous. She collects: gloves, T-shirts, buttons, cherry pits, clothing labels, her own hair, even outdoor faucets. Her structures — what else to call a hanging garden of gloves, or globes made of faucets, buttons, or cherry pits? — take on the beauty of deliberate formation, but also carry the offbeat sensibility that comes with obsessions.

Bonner’s work has humor, but it is no joke. She is a fabric artist of great depth, and her use of found, recycled materials adds a second layer of understanding to the technical care that goes into this work.

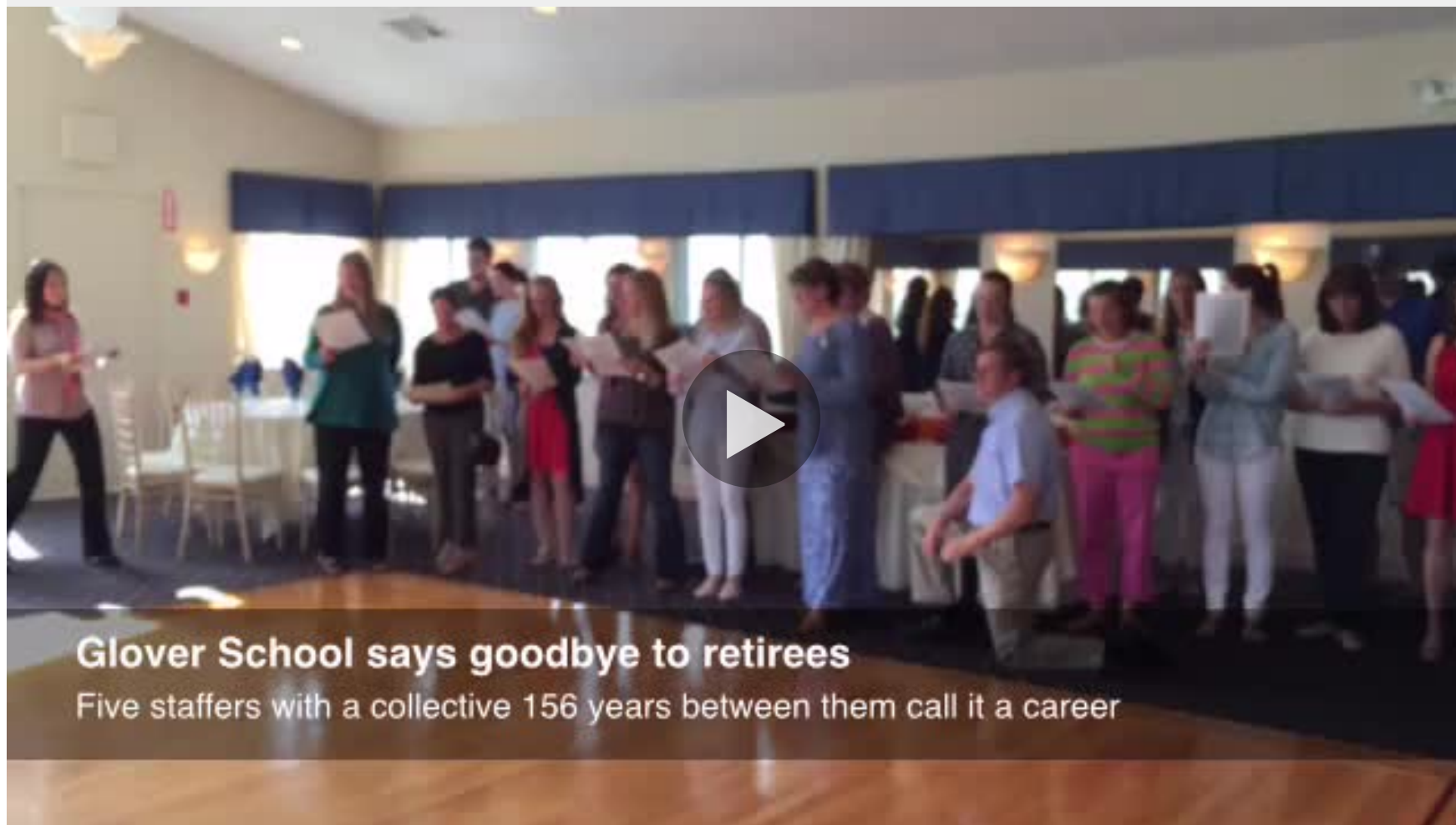
Seeing an “animal hide” made of thousands of clothing labels not only brings a smile to your face, it makes you want to live that way — wasting nothing, thinking deeply, transforming the ordinary and overlooked into the magical.

“Time Matters” runs through July 4 at the Cultural Center at Rocky Neck, 6 Wonson St., Gloucester. For more information visit [www.rockyneckartcolony.org](http://www.rockyneckartcolony.org) or call 978-515-7004.


Keith Powers covers music and the arts for GateHouse Media and WBUR’s ARTery. Follow @PowersKeith; email to keithmichaelpowers@gmail.com


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