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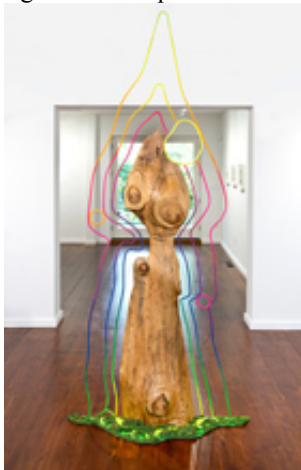
Artist David Shaw's "Dear Everything," at Hudson Gallery

"Dear Everything at Hudson gallery explores capacity of world to endure

by Amy Griffin Published 7:02 pm, Thursday, November 19, 2015

Nature has a way of healing itself. In Alan Weisman's 2007 book "The World Without Us," the author explains how quickly our manmade world would be reclaimed by nature were humans to disappear. The work in Brooklyn-based artist David Shaw's "Dear Everything," at Jeff Bailey Gallery in Hudson, seems to suggest something similar — the natural world will prevail.

A larger-than-life figure stands in the center of the gallery's front room, surrounded by a halo of rainbow colors. At the base is what looks like an aerial view of a landscaped expanse. The figure is a single slice of wood, sanded, smoothed down and surrounded by painted steel rods that follow the curve of the wood. The piece, called "Brink," pulls all the other works in the show together, gathering themes that are explored — science, nature and the human impact on it. The rainbow lines make up a kind of aura around this abstract figurative sculpture. Those colors of the spectrum are reflected, literally, in the works surrounding it.



Shaw makes judicious use of holographic laminate in flat wall pieces and another large sculpture. The holographic material seems to glow as it picks up and reflects light. Depending on where you stand, even on what you're wearing, the colors in these pieces change.

The wall pieces look mechanical — like models of ductwork, perhaps — except climbing all over these man-made pieces is what looks like moss (the fake grass material used in "Brink" and in railroad models all over the world). There's a sense of nature reclaiming these constructions, which have their own aura. Each one hovers just off the wall with a warm glow emitting from them, caused by the bright colors painted on the back.

In his largest sculpture, "First Piece," a piece of furniture is stacked with cut logs that bleed rainbows (holographic laminate is only applied to the sliced cross-sections). The piece has the look of an Ikea credenza overtaken by trees. Its legs are logs which cut through the entire piece and out the sides as bits of moss creep up the sides.

All these works are abstractions nodding toward representation. As much as they suggest these themes of nature, they do so without being didactic or cynical. Full spectrum lights are reported to make people feel happier — maybe it's those holographic colors that infuse this potentially weighty work with a refreshing lightness.

While the front room of this fairly small space is given to Shaw, Amy Talluto, of Hurley, Ulster County, fills the back room with graphite-on-paper drawings. These earnest impressions of nature, which Talluto draws from memory rather than photographs, don't at first seem to bear a connection to what Shaw is doing. Where Shaw goes big and bold, Talluto's monochrome pencil drawings are small and impressionistic. Shaw indirectly references landscape, while Talluto gets right to the point. Both are working out ideas about humans interacting with nature in starkly different ways that make for an interesting contrast.

Even the sculptures by Carl D'Alvia, visible through the back window of Talluto's room and left out in the backyard from the last group show here, are related. His "Slab" is a geometric bronze sculpture that appears overgrown with hair.

Jeff Bailey's gallery has only been in Hudson for about 18 months, having moved up from New York City, where he'd been based since 2003. His small but elegantly renovated space here is a welcome addition to the ever-growing contemporary art scene on Hudson's Warren Street. Since he arrived, he already has hosted over 20 solo or group exhibitions featuring his own roster of artists and emerging and established artists. Shaw's "Dear Everything," signals that we can expect great things from this new space.

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