

GROUP DYNAMICS

Looking back on the 2012 Syracuse art scene, the discussion begins with the Everson Museum of Art's radical revamping of its biennial exhibition that showcases artists from upstate New York. Then the focus shifts to solo shows, to exhibits dealing with identity from various perspectives, and to galleries and arts organizations celebrating significant milestones. Finally, there were several noteworthy group exhibits as well as shows that took place at non-gallery venues.

First, *TONY 2012: The Other New York* broke new ground by presenting artworks not only at the Everson, 401 Harrison St., but also at other venues—the Onondaga Historical Association, ArtRage and Stone Quarry Hill Art Park, to name just a few. In addition, the exhibit had much more appeal than just multiple sites; it assembled a strong portfolio of diverse pieces.



Disaster movie: Artist Noriko Ambe is herself projected on the screen as it hangs on one side of the Warehouse Gallery in this site-specific installation.

ArtRage's *Fearless Lens* displayed photos touching on downtown Syracuse, Mumbai, India, moral implications of torture and war's aftermath for warriors. At the Everson, *TONY 2012* gathered Doug Dubois' images, Kim Waale's installation resembling a spider's web, Tom Huff's installation, and Ellen Blalock's powerful works focusing on African-American men in the United States.

Around town several solo exhibitions stood out. Light Work hung Susan Worsham's *Bittersweet/Bloodwork*, with its elegant, poignant view of love and loss, nature and childhood. At Syracuse University's downtown Warehouse Gallery, Noriko Ambe's *Inner Water* reflected on the 2011 tsunami that devastated Japan. SU Art Galleries hosted several retrospectives. One featured 70 prints, paintings and drawings by Karl Schrag. Another reassessed the late Syracuse artist Jeff Davies' work.

Wilson Art Gallery, at Le Moyne College, presented a selection of collages and assemblages by Jim Ridlon. When the show wrapped up, he donated the pieces to the college's permanent collection.

Peter Jones' *Prophecy*, at the Everson, offered his view of a world in crisis, both spiritually and environmentally. The show integrated haunting ceramic figures, egg-shaped sculptures hanging from the ceiling and other works referencing Haudenosaunee beliefs about the end of time.

Various exhibits centered on the notion of identity. At LaCasita Cultural Center, Efran Lopez's one-man show drew on his experiences growing up in Guatemala and then returning to that nation years later. Tonja Jorgerson's artworks, displayed at Craft Chemistry, discussed illness and identity. Community Folk Art Center (CFAC) presented *Reflection and Identity*, featuring works by two artists: W. Michelle Harris and Michael Roman. They work in different media and develop different themes, but both have a strong interest in the human form.



CFAC, incidentally, celebrated its 40th anniversary this year. Its journey has encompassed several locations, dozens of exhibitions, and its founders' commitment and vision. A second organization, Associated Artists, commemorated its 85-year history by staging shows at the Onondaga Historical Association (OHA) and the Manlius Library.

Beyond that, the Syracuse Cultural Workers hung 100 of their posters at OHA, drawing on 30 years of creating posters, calendars and other pieces. They communicate themes such as peace, social justice and respect for the earth.



The Erie Canal Museum marked its 50th anniversary with an ongoing display of objects and items that appear there on a permanent basis, and a series of one-time exhibitions. These included *The Irish and the Erie Canal*, noteworthy for its historical images and artifacts, and Ray Sax's pen-and-ink drawings of canal locks.

In terms of group exhibits, Szozda Gallery displayed *Altered Environments*, which showed Laurie Wellner's pieces interpreting the sky and planets above us, and Willson Cumber's images looking at the intersection of humanity and nature in local parks.

ArtRage organized and presented *In Our View: A Community Perspective*, a show that invited residents of the Hawley-Green and North Side neighborhoods to submit photos of their own choosing. The exhibit both opened on time and included various perspectives on neighborhood life.

In Auburn, the Schweinfurth Art Center again displayed *Made in New York*, an exhibition of works whose creators come from throughout our state. Each year, the show has a different flavor; the 2012 edition featured more fiber and digital works.

Edgewood Gallery continued to stage group exhibits that combine diverse pieces and still manage to be cohesive. *Natural Abstractions*, for example,

presented David Harper's wood and mixed-media sculptures, Fernando Llosa's oils and imaginative stone assemblages, and Carol Ackles' ceramic jewelry. A second show displayed pieces by five local weavers: Sara Saulson and Suzanne Loveland, Sherry Gordon and Lauren Bristol, and Judi Witkin. This was another successful exhibition.

Finally, there are restaurants, libraries and other venues that host exhibits throughout the year. Indeed, Elizabeth Mangle's one-woman show, *Wilderness Inspired Art: Nature's Fabric*, appeared at May Memorial Unitarian Church. Amy Bartell showed a selection of new paintings at Sparky Town Restaurant. Downtown, the Central Library displayed David Hicock's pastels and animation art. Several of his portraits depicted local artists.

And the Petit Branch Library was the venue for the Griffin Hill Photography Club's *Color and Light* exhibition. It featured diverse images by six artists—landscapes, a nighttime view of Portland, Maine, a shot of a town square in Nepal, and other photos.