

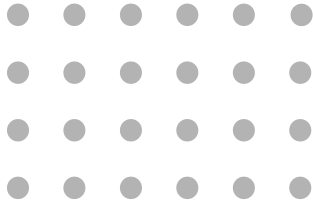
PROJECTS '07

August 18 through October 14, 2007

**New Installations at
The Carriage House**



Islip Art Museum



Projects '07

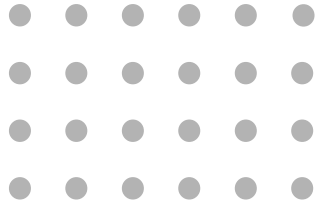
August 18 - October 14, 2007

Betsy Alwin
Pedro Cruz-Castro
Stephanie Dinkins
Kimberley Hart
Joanne Howard
Takafumi Ide
Taeseong Kim
Steven Millar
Kirsten Nelson
Joe Scinto
Ilene Sunshine



New Installations at The Carriage House

Projects '07



The summer season at the Carriage House ends with *Projects '07*, an exhibition of installations by 11 emerging artists who explore a variety of aesthetic, social and political concerns.

None of the artists knew each other before they began their residencies in August, yet their works are linked by a common concern with landscape—the natural one surrounding the Carriage House, the imaginary one that dwells within the mind, and the emotional one that forms the soul.

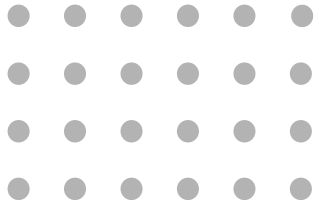
Several artists have interacted with the century-old architecture of the building. Others have responded to the mix of pristine beaches and tract housing that surrounds the site. Many have developed projects that comment on the plight of the environment and mankind's role as stewards of the earth. No matter the point of departure, all of the works are characterized by wit, inventiveness and a deep engagement with the world around us.

Greeting visitors who enter the Carriage House through the west door is **Pedro Cruz-Castro's** comic *Stairs/Chairs*. Observing that humans use chairs to step on and stairs to sit on, the artist has conflated these two familiar household objects into a single absurd but functional sculpture.

Kirsten Nelson's spare installation in the Cage Room draws inspiration from the moldings and architectural details that are characteristic of turn-of-the-century buildings like the Carriage House and Brookwood Hall. She has installed wooden trim along the walls and ceilings to suggest potential rooms and spatial configurations. Yet her carefully cut corners never meet, and the ends of molding pieces remain raw and unfinished. This deliberately incomplete installation suggests both limitless possibility and thoughtless abandonment.

A Manhattan resident, **Joanne Howard** has long admired the power of plants to reclaim city sidewalks and deserted buildings. In Gallery #2, the artist imagines a scenario in which vegetation takes over the Carriage House, but in a decidedly civilized fashion. The swaths of grass, twigs and leaves that intrude into this domestic space have formed a traditional oriental rug—an inspired truce between wilderness and refinement, man and nature.

Taking a cue from visitor services in major cities and tourist destinations, **Joe**



Scinto has installed a kiosk in the Carriage House stairwell that contains interviews with the artists in *Projects '07*. His detailed, scale model of our building gives new meaning to the phrase “if these walls could talk...”

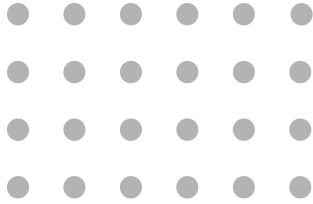
Tucked into a tiny closet in the stairwell is **Taeseong Kim’s** miniature city. Constructed of found objects and index cards with notations by the artist, the sculpture is a mix of a diary and a toy that, although whimsical, alludes to unchecked population expansion and rapidly disappearing space.

Ilene Sunshine’s installation in the Annex Room in the stairwell is the result of her engagement with an unlikely architectural feature of the Carriage House: our newly installed electric service. The artist has gathered vines and branches from the Carriage House grounds and fastened them to the metal conduits along the walls to create a three-dimensional line drawing. The merger of diametrically opposed opposites— of wood and stainless steel, of straight edge and curve, of manufactured and natural—is seamless and confounding.

Steven Millar studies the growth patterns of cities and suburbs. In Gallery #3, he has created a multi-part sculpture based on the actual topography of East Islip. Tongue-and-groove beadboard sections equate with street grids, including familiar intersections such as the one at Carleton Avenue and Irish Lane. Small white blocks within the grids represent the precise housing density of each area. The effect is akin to walking into and around a blowup of a map.

Intrigued by the slow but inevitable way the earth shifts and changes, **Betsy Alwin** has created a giant kaleidoscope in the Carriage House bathroom. The entire structure echoes the materials used to create her gallery space. The body is made of the same tongue-and-groove siding found on the walls, the mechanism is made of drains like the ones in the sinks, and the lens is filled with bits of plastic and organic material from the Carriage House grounds. The result is an intriguing sculpture that continually assembles and reassembles its own environment, even as it alludes to eons of Long Island geological formations and reformations.

Stephanie Dinkins’s installation in Gallery #4 captures the emotional landscape that Afro-American women inhabit in contemporary society. Against a screen made of pages from Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*, a powerful critique



of American racial relations, Dinkins projects a film of herself picking her way across a narrow beam that stretches over the Grand Canyon. Her harrowing balancing act is a metaphor and a message: one false step in today's still racially charged environment can result in disaster.

Kimberley Hart's installation in Gallery #5 is a stage for her alter ego, a young woman of many skills, abundant energy and great resourcefulness. Based on clues from the props within this setting, the heroine of this make-believe world can tame horses and master her pack of dogs with ease. Yet all is not idyllic. The bunnies that inhabit the artist's celestial forest, though charming, are bright red--a doomed target even in a fairy tale.

Takafumi Ide's inspiration for *Butterflies* is the board-covered windows in Gallery #6. Imagining them as "windows to the soul," he has created three complementary frames in which visitors are invited to watch themselves appear and disappear, like hovering ghosts, as mysterious voices from his audio component ask questions such as "Who are you?" and "Who will you be?"

Projects '07 was curated from an annual open call for proposals that attracted nearly 130 applicants from every corner of the globe. A distinguished panel of art professionals selected the finalists—a difficult task given the high quality of submissions this year. Contributing time and expertise to the panel were: Susan Hoeltzel, Director of the Lehman College Gallery of Art; Jennifer McGregor, Director of the Wave Hill Gallery; Jason Paradis, an artist who has exhibited at the Carriage House and Islip Art Museum; the team of J. D. Walsh and Nicole Tschampel, who received a Carriage House grant last year; and Islip Art Museum and Carriage House staff, including: Karen Shaw, Senior Curator; Janet Goleas, Director of the Museum's Permanent Gallery; Katie Corcoran, Assistant Director and Carriage House Program Coordinator; and Mary Lou Cohalan, Director of the Islip Art Museum and Carriage House.

By definition and design, installation art is ephemeral. These works in the Carriage House will cease to exist when the exhibition closes. We shall miss our artists and their thoughtful, inspiring works of art when our doors close in October. We know they will all continue to make important contributions to our culture as they advance their artistic careers.

Mary Lou Cohalan/ Director/ August 2007

Artists' Statements

Betsy Alwin

Momentary Island

I am drawn to the Carriage House because of its unique qualities as an exhibition space. The character of the building itself—the irregular walls, the rough woodwork and exposed piping—seems an excellent setting for my new project. It is my goal to make a work that springs directly from the Carriage House interior. The installation is created from the textures, forms and materials that I found in the space.

My sculpture is a functional kaleidoscope, which is made from materials that are similar to those in the Bathroom Gallery. The main body is constructed of painted slats, like the ones on the walls, and includes a sink, mirror, acrylic sheeting and electrical tubing. Everything I use takes its physical cues from the architecture of the space it inhabits.

The eyepiece of the scope is a drain hole in a shallow sink. Looking through the drain hole, the viewer sees into a shaft made of mirrors that reflects the chamber at the far end. Inside the chamber is a “landscape” composed of the soil, stones, color gels, plant materials and various objects from the immediate outdoors. The chamber rotates very slowly, using bearings and a motor mounted in the underside of the kaleidoscope. The scope points toward the bathroom windows, taking in light from the exterior source.

As the chamber turns, the landscapes change, erupting and eroding in a three-minute revolution. This movement is meant to evoke the idea of geographical evolution—to remind viewers that the landscape continues to change in time due to climate change, tidal forces and human intervention. The evolution of Long Island is a case in point. Although the kaleidoscope is an unassuming object within the space, it references an immensely important subject. The idea is to grasp, through the playfulness of the scope, that our Earth is ever-changing, that one view lasts only a second, giving way to forces beyond our control, but not beyond our fascination.



Betsy Alwin
Momentary Island
Detail
Location: The Bathroom

Pedro Cruz-Castro

Stairs/Chairs

People use chairs as stairs everyday. They climb on them to change light bulbs or to reach objects.

People use stairs as chairs. You often see this. An example is the New York Public Library, or the Metropolitan Museum, where people sit on the entrance steps to eat and chat.

The installation *Stairs/Chairs* reveals the secondary function of each object and makes it the primary function. The staircase of the Carriage House becomes a place to sit, to put on shoes, to have an impromptu conversation. A chair may be dragged over to reach a high shelf, becoming a stepladder.

Stairs/Chairs joins the two objects in functional absurdity.



Pedro Cruz-Castro
Stairs/Chairs
Detail
Location: West Entrance

Stephanie Dinkins

Americana I

The end is the beginning, but lies far ahead

Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

Much of my work is made with this quote in mind. It is a powerful statement that encourages contemplation, acts as a reminder and guides my creative process. In the case of *Americana I*, it is the catalyst for using the *Invisible Man* as the structure for the installation as well as a call to remember what is yet to come.

Americana I melds two disparate elements. A large-scale screen constructed from the pages of three copies of *Invisible Man*, waxed and bonded together. The pages are hung like a curtain that limits access to an otherwise accessible corner of the room. The short video projected onto the curtain depicts a woman walking, tightrope style, along a narrow curb with the wind challenging every step. A mountain-ringed valley provides the setting for this precarious balancing act. By combining these striking images, I hope to evoke thoughts of the American experience as lived by those who struggle to find comfortable space in the conflicted social, cultural and political geographies of America.



Stephanie Dinkins
Americana I
Detail
Location: Gallery 4

Kimberley Hart

The Chase

The Chase continues my alter ego's adventures into the concerns of the quintessential outdoorsman. This persona is a stereotypical, ultra-frilly missy whose sweet girl disposition has been tempered by a wild and roguish imagination. She's a mischievous and irreverent young girl who is well-versed in the outdoor arts of fishing, trapping and hunting.

My work often utilizes simple narratives that reveal something of the complex nature of my alter ego. The Carriage House and its grounds, which with rose-colored glasses and a little imagination is reminiscent of the sprawling estates that were once host to fox hunts, offers the unique opportunity for my persona to delve into what was once viewed as a refined endeavor. Playing with her toy ponies and puppies, my alter ego blithely imitates an activity many have come to recognize to be a barbaric pastime.

The Chase is an extravagant playhouse scene, a setting for an imaginary girl to act out a complex, make-believe scenario.



Kimberley Hart
The Chase
Detail
Location: Gallery 5

Joanne Howard

Oriental Rug

The degradation of the environment is one of my primary concerns and points of interest as an artist. Unlike most of my work, which is a reflection on the precarious nature of the world and our collective psyche, my Carriage House installation takes a more optimistic view of the fate of the earth.

As an abandoned parking lot is taken over by weeds that manage to break through the asphalt cracks, ultimately returning it to a natural state, this installation is an observation of the tenacity of plants and their ability to reclaim a territory. By utilizing the traditional, decorative motif of domestic interiors, the relationship between the natural and man-made are melded and convoluted. The shadow of residue of what was is echoed in patterns informed by nature, of nature itself.

The floor component of this installation is a 'carpet' comprised of artificial moss and grass. In addition to the growth appearing to come up out of the ground in a traditional rug pattern, naturally occurring cracks and crevices in the space have been used to integrate the piece into the site.

The walls surrounding the central piece, on which a photograph of nature is used as a domestic wall hanging, also echo the pattern and give the impression that the growth is seeping through the walls.



Joanne Howard
Oriental Rug
Detail
Location: Gallery 2

Takafumi Ide

Butterflies

The idea for *Butterflies* came to my mind when I attended an Open House at the Carriage House. I stayed in the space for awhile. After spending some time in the space, I noticed that there were three large windows on the east side. I wondered about how people must look through these windows and optimistically imagine their future. At the same time, the impression from the closed windows was disturbing. Since the room was painted completely black, I imagined that there were many spirits that couldn't find their way home: a trapped feeling.

In *Butterflies*, as well as in my other work, my conceptual and aesthetic concerns are inspired by a specific site. By spending time in the allotted location, I envision activating the space. I transform my visualization from the space into my installation. The materials often dictate my idea. In the past I have incorporated small, fragile objects such as branches, gold leaf, handmade paper, light, tiny shards of metal and electronic circuitry. These delicate elements are meant to touch a chord within the audience and suggest a moment of calm, delight and reflection. The harmony that exists between the objects offers a sense of solemnity. All of my recent work, including *Butterflies*, has been suspended from the ceiling. The hanging structures give a sense of instability, which rightly describes my anxiety about the future. At the same time, the combination of fragility and floating objects is as fleeting as a web between branches, inferring ephemeral life, like that of a mayfly. I want my audience to experience the work with such feelings.

Sound is essential to my work; I construct spaces with a combination of voice and created auditory effects. A blinking light, synchronized electrically with the harmonized sound, communicates with the viewer while casting a shadow. Composite modules of repeated sound, small objects, and shadow propagate my message. The viewer is stimulated by the psychological and physiological effect of my work on the senses.

The viewer can feel the harmony and participate in my installation. I hope the experience created by my work encourages audiences to reflect on important transitional moments in their own lives.



Takafumi Ide
Butterflies
Detail
Location: Gallery 6

Taeseong Kim

Village

I use index cards, found photography, drawings, castaway detritus and everyday objects that range from dried plants to leftover bread crusts to create idiosyncratic environments for idealized homes. Through my choice of materials, the resulting structures investigate our longings for home, our desire to find comfort and protection within our home, and the difficulties of finding a connection to place that are magnified by the experience of being an immigrant. My works are fragile and the combinations of images are unlikely in the real world, as though any home is one the verge of collapse, risks being destroyed, and is contingent on circumstances that coalesce for only a moment. These houses also become physical extensions of the inhabitant, conveying the passing of time. They become characters who also exhibit fears, expectations and change.

I created a small landscape with houses by drawing on ordinary index cards, using mixed media, such as found photographs, receipts, tour brochures, paper, clay, dried plants, and small plastic stuff. Each index card contains a different story. The index card represents the interaction between forgetfulness and recall. I put the index cards together to create a landscape that is playful, fragile and delicate.



Taeseong Kim
Village
Detail
Location: Alcove Closet

Steven Millar

Suburban Archive

My sculpture grows literally and figuratively from the walls of Gallery Room 3. Constructed of bead board, wood blocks and white paint, the installation seamlessly emerges from multiple points in the gallery.

The installation is an improvised abstraction of a very particular site: the suburban community of East Islip. The bead boards are the roadways and the wooden blocks reference the houses and the density of the topography. The installation reflects the actual pattern of the town.

I began my piece by visiting the Carriage House and by researching the area so that parts of the installation reflect the layout of houses as seen from a satellite image. Some parts of the installation are abstract evocations of residential streets, reflecting not so much the actual placement of houses but the density of certain areas—some streets are tightly packed and others are still open and bear the traces of former enormous old estates. Standing in the gallery, the viewer is surrounded, caught up in a panorama of suburban construction that seems to drift, turn and ever grow.



Steven Millar
Suburban Archive
Detail
Location: Gallery 3

Kirsten Nelson

Islip Room Drawing

My work explores the gap between present experience and remembered space. In my Carriage House project, *Islip Room Drawing*, my central focus is to alter space, both physically and psychologically, using the details and character of the site itself. This “room” drawn into the existing site is largely defined by wooden trim, a characteristic of older structures like this carriage house and the surrounding buildings. The new layers drawn into the site emerge out of existing structures, evoking both the remains of the walls left behind and misplaced additions. The sculptural forms, constructed out of common home building materials, exist between object and space. The sculptural objects blend into the architecture of the room while at the same time, do not belong.

The pieces initially appear as cross sections and fragments that would fit together, but in the end, do not. Each section evokes a recognizable site, yet it remains an invented fragment, or “false” rendition of everyday architecture. In a similar fashion, I set a stage for potential narratives in the piece, and stop short, leaving only the boundaries of such a potential. The layers developed in this sculptural drawing create an uncertainty as to what belongs, what previously existed, and what may have been removed from the site. The careful craftsmanship of the work in contrast to the forms’ lack of function evokes a sense of the uncanny and humorous.



Kirsten Nelson
Islip Room Drawing
Detail
Location: Cage Room

Joseph Scinto

Kiosk: Artistic Ingredients 2007

When you are in a large public place, like an airport or a shopping mall, you will most likely come across a kiosk. One side might be an advertisement while the other side is illuminated with a large map. On that map there may be a little red arrow pointing to a spot, which indicates your position: “you are here.” From that information, you now have an understanding of your physical place within your spatial surroundings. You now have an idea where “Gate 18” is, and how to get there from where you are.

Kiosk: Artistic Ingredients 2007 serves just like that airport kiosk. It is an interface between the viewer and the artist. Apart from the artist statement, the viewer’s only insight into the artist’s mission is the actual artwork. In the typical art gallery/installation setting, the viewer has to experience the artwork, then draw from his or her own experience and knowledge to try and decipher the message the artwork is conveying.

Kiosk is an actual scale model of the Carriage House, which sits atop a beveled cube which is clad in cedar siding, just like the exterior of the building. Within the beveled edge of the cube are two surface-mounted LCD monitors. Each LCD screen focuses on a particular artist and his or her site-specific work that is located within the Carriage House. One monitor features the artist speaking about their creation, while the other shows the work, and in some cases, the work in progress. These are the actual “artistic ingredients” that go into this Carriage House exhibition.

It is very rare that the viewer gets to bear witness to the creation and installation of an artwork. The aim of *Kiosk* is to enlighten the viewer and allow a fuller understanding of each of the art installations located with this site. It is a teaching tool and enables the artists to spread their messages, and it helps the viewer to gain a deeper understanding and insight into the practices and processes of constructing an art installation.



Joseph Scinto
Kiosk
Detail
Location: Stairwell

Ilene Sunshine

Conduit

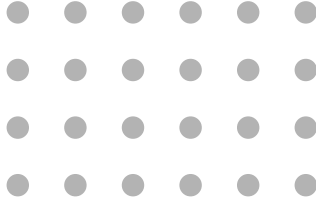
My site-specific installation, *Conduit*, could be considered a collaboration with the electrician who recently rewired the Carriage House. I followed the trail of existing conduit pipe that lined the room and added more—a walk-in drawing of metal lines and vines began to grow.

As I went outside to forage for materials in the woods, and back inside to forge a literal bond between hardware and vine, the distinction between pipes that conduct electricity and plants that convey water and sunlight began to blur.

As a result, my decision to infuse the space with a green glow became inevitable.



Ilene Sunshine
Conduit
Detail
Location: Alcove Annex



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Projects '07 in the Carriage House.

State of the Arts



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