

TreeMendous

**Projects from the
Carriage House Workspace**

December 4 - January 6, 2012 ■ Curated by Karen Shaw

the
Carriage
House



TreeMendous '11

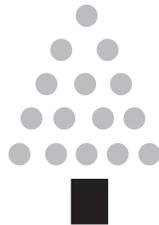
December 4 - January 6, 2012

Ken Butler
Alessandra Exposito
Las Hermanas Iglesias
Gisela Insuaste
Hong Seon Jang
Noah Klersfeld

Curated by Karen Shaw
Community Tree Curated by Sara Kinsey

● ● ● ● ● ● **New Installations at The Carriage House**

Tree Mendous



To celebrate the holidays, the Carriage House staff invited six artists to install projects in the various rooms of our landmark building on the grounds of Brookwood Hall. The exuberant results range from a festive pinata with a dark side to haunting porcelain tree branches that peep out from closets. The projects all echo the colors and sounds of the season, but each contains elements that are decidedly unexpected.

To complement our artists' projects, and to anchor the theme of our exhibition, the staff of the Carriage House Workspace, their families and friends produced *Frozen in Time*, a traditional holiday tree with a contemporary twist and contemporary message. Sited in Gallery 4, our towering artificial evergreen reaches toward a ceiling dotted with dozens of silver snowflakes that hover like constellations above it. At the foot of our homage to winter are massive ice sculptures of trees, nestled in blankets of glittering lights and fabric. Sara Kinsey, the curator for this project, chose ice as a symbol of the ephemeral quality of our shared lives these days—of the rapid, changing nature of our economy, politics and global climate. As an element that retains its essential makeup even as it transmutes into water or steam, ice both disquiets and reassures.

Hong Seon Jang's *Parasite* in Gallery #1 is a sprawling, fractal abstraction of a tree limb that is made of thousands of matchsticks. Labor-intensive in the extreme, the piece conveys intimations of its own destruction. Fascinating and fragile, menacing and dangerous, Jang's work navigates a world of opposing tensions and contradictions.

Ken Butler has installed a full-size grand piano in Gallery #2 complete with a Liberace candelabra. The strings and hammers have been replaced with a hodgepodge of metals and trinkets that visitors can activate at the key board. Every time they strike a note, they create a cacophony of sound and light that is projected into the room as a unique interactive symphony.

Alessandra Exposito has created two sculptures for our exhibit which she installed in the closets in the Carriage House stairwell. Made of porcelain-like clay, and shaped like blooming tree branches, they emerge incongruously from the floors and walls of our galleries like ghosts from a time before the building existed.



In Gallery #3, **Las Hermanas Iglesias**, a sister team of artists, created a holiday pinata with a humorously dark side. *Glitter Grenade* is a perfect replica of military ordnance, but when it exploded during a performance at our exhibition reception, it showered the room with delicious chocolates instead of destruction.

Gisela Insuaste's *Overgrowth* in Gallery #5 is a room-sized geometric sculpture that is based on a single, triangular shape which the artist varies through color and placement. Repetitious yet inventive, the work is a visual equivalent of a Bach fugue, a theme with endless variations.

In Gallery #6, **Noah Klersfeld** presents a video of mundane activities that he has transformed into a dazzling light show of color and sound. The source of his glittering projection is the daily traffic along Canal Street in Manhattan which the artist shot through a section of chain link fence. The results are perfect accompaniment for the holidays.

In the years to come, we hope that our *TreeMendous* exhibit will grow like trees do— aspiring to great heights and branching out in unexpected directions. We thank you for your continued support of our artists and their projects, and we wish you, your family and friends joy for the holidays and peace in the New Year.

Mary Lou Cohalan

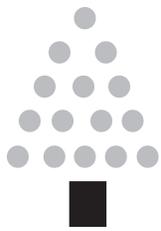
Director

Karen Shaw

Senior Curator

Sara Kinsey

Community Tree Curator



Artists' Statements

Ken Butler

Urban Grand Piano

The interactive keyboard is a grand piano sized multimedia assemblage constructed of reconfigured objects, machine parts, and other audiovisual items of wood, metal, and plastic that makes music and projects images at the stroke of a key. Each key triggers a different sound, light, and/or movement activating such things as slide projectors, radios, neon tubes, lights, tape recorders, and motors strumming strings and other resonant objects and devices. The keyboard requires the viewer/participant to improvise the creation of a multimedia composition as function and form collide in a collage environment of hyperactive hardware; a one-person opera of objects and images.

Contact: www.mindspring.com

Ken Butler is an artist and musician, as well as an experimental musical instrument builder. His Hybrid musical instruments and other artworks explore the interaction and transformation of common and uncommon objects, altered images, sounds and silence. The idea of bricolage, essentially using whatever is "at hand", is at the center of his art.

He is internationally recognized as an innovator of experimental musical instruments. His works have been exhibited and performed in galleries, clubs, museums, festivals, and theatres throughout the USA, Canada, and Europe including The Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and Lincoln Center and The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City as well as in South America and Japan.



Ken Butler
Urban Grand Piano 2008-11
Mixed media
Location: Gallery #2

Alessandra Exposito

Untitled

In a new series, I am inspired by the evocative nature of stray, discarded furniture that decomposes back into the earth, overtaken by growth. Similar to past bodies of work, I am constructing fictional narratives that reveal glimpses into the past lives of these objects and those who live with them. Central to the series is a nightstand, reminiscent of one I had as a child in the 70s. A sculpted tree bores through and envelops the structure, calling attention to the temporal nature of once-cherished objects. For the Carriage House, I have used the empty closet space, and the evocative structure of the building itself, as a space overtaken with growth. A tree and a branch, both flourishing with embellished vegetables, goldfish, baby birds, vines, and flowers, evokes both the past as well as the future of aging spaces.

Contact: www.alessandraexposito.com

Alessandra Expósito received her MFA from the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers in 1998 and has shown in numerous group exhibitions in New York City and beyond. Venues include Ambrosino Gallery (Miami, FL), the Academy of Arts and Letters (NY, NY), Schroeder Romero Gallery (NY, NY), the Nathan Cummings Foundation (NY, NY), The Shore Institute of Contemporary Arts (Long Branch, NJ) and Art in General (NY, NY). Museum exhibitions include "Open House, Working in Brooklyn," at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, "Miniatures" at the Jersey City Museum, and "El Museo's Biennial" at El Museo del Barrio, NY. She was the recipient of a Marie Walsh Sharpe Studio and a MacDowell Colony residence. In 2005, she won the Richard and Hinda Rosenthal Foundation Award and the Purchase Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 2007, she won a NYFA fellowship in sculpture.



Alessandra Exposito
Untitled 2011
Mixed media
Location: Stairwell space

Las Hermanas Iglesias *Golden Grenade*

Las Hermanas Iglesias creates multi-media works that incorporate interactive elements, transgress borders between disciplines and address a range of shared autobiographical experiences. The synthesis of their background, from Dominican and Norwegian parents, and their experience of the dynamic environment of Queens influences their work, which often comments on connection to place, bridging disparate materials and practices and speaks to the challenges and possibilities of collaboration. From disco balls to stitched maps of Paris, community potlucks to plant shares, diamond piñata bashing to arm-wrestling contests, Las Hermanas explore issues of hybridity and are determined to expand their collaborative practice that engages the community both physically and conceptually. *Golden Grenade* falls within a series of piñata sculptures. Covered entirely with gold glitter, the interactive sculpture is an oversized replica of a hand-held explosive, filled with American fifty-cent pieces. A layer of absurdity traces throughout Las Hermanas's projects, a lens through which the viewer and participant can engage with serious themes of competition and violence. The sister's collaboration speaks to larger sociopolitical arenas and revels in art's power to construct new realities and forge social engagements.

Contact: www.LasHermanasIglesias.com

***Las Hermanas Iglesias** are Lisa and Janelle Iglesias, a collaborative team of sisters who were born and raised in Queens, NY. As second-generation Norwegian-Dominicans, their work often comments on bridging disparate materials and practices. Lisa Iglesias received her MFA from the University of Florida and Janelle received her Master's from Virginia Commonwealth University. Las Hermanas has shown collaboratively both in the United States and abroad, including the Queens Museum of Art, the Jersey City Museum and El Museo del Barrio. The collaborative team has attended residencies in Paris and Tasmania. Las Hermanas has received funding from NALAC and Queens Council on the Arts to realize their collaborative projects, and they have each received fellowships from the Urban Arts Initiative/ New York City and the New York Foundation for the Arts.*



Las Hermanas Iglesias
Golden Grenade
Mixed Media
Installation detail
Location: Gallery 3

Gisela Insuaste

Overgrowth

My work is based on real and imagined places that explore the intersection of architecture, topography, and memory. Through paintings, drawings, sculptures and site-specific installations, I tend to reveal the subtle and quirky topologies of urban spaces that are composed of interdependent elements that resonate with personal narratives. My interest in urban spaces is rooted in my desire to understand the interconnectedness of people, places, and things, and thus create spaces that reflect our fragile and dynamic relationship between the built and natural environment. Through these artworks, I explore the physical, emotional and politically charged places we live in while questioning our individual and shared cultural space and identity. Whether it's a bike ride across a bridge or a plane ride across an ocean, my interactions through various spaces continue to inform my work. They become metaphors of experience, where a shift in location, emotion, and activity, give rise to new ways of looking and interpreting.

Contact: www.Giselainsuaste.com

***Gisela Insuaste** received an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and a BA in Anthropology & Studio Art from Dartmouth College. She is the Nature and Art Programs Manager at Wave Hill, a cultural center and public garden in the Bronx, NY. She has participated in exhibitions and projects nationwide such as the John and June Allcott Gallery, UNC, Chapel Hill, NC; Vox Populi, Philadelphia, PA; Satellite Gallery at the University of Texas, San Antonio, TX; Aljira-the Center for Contemporary Art, Newark, NJ; Aicon Gallery, NY; Cuchifritos Gallery, NY; ABC No Rio, NY; and the Queens Museum of Art, Queens, NY; She has been the recipient of several grants and awards, including The Richard Driehaus/Artadia Emerging Artist Award (Chicago), Illinois Arts Council Artist Grants, and MacDowell Colony Artist Fellowships. Recently, she was selected to participate in El Museo del Barrio's Bienal- S-Files 2011, NY.*



Gisela Insuaste
Overgrowth
Mixed media
Installation detail
Location: Gallery 5

Hong Seon Jang

Parasite

The use of matchsticks as the primary medium plays with a contradiction. As the fragile natural form grows larger with the addition of more matchsticks there is an underlying danger of the matchsticks' unintended destructive consequence.

I create works that evoke a fundamental recognition of our space and environment and imply physical vulnerability in our daily life. These ideas evolved from my interest in studying the similarities between human and non-human life forms pertaining to structures, symbols, and patterns. The main concept is a fascination with the comparison of human activity and natural phenomena as it corresponds to the circulation of destruction and creation. My work consists of installations often made out of found objects and common products. In giving these everyday materials new meanings and aesthetic possibilities, I strive to actively practice the concepts of the Eastern philosophies of the circulatory life system and the continuous flow of connections. I recreate or manipulate the materials into a likeness of natural forms to embody new contexts of physical existence, in a sense, mimicking the fundamental force of survival and growth.

Contact: www.hongseonjang.com

***Hong Seon Jang** is a returning artist at the Carriage House. He earned his MFA from Rochester Institute of Technology and his undergraduate degree from Dan Kook University in South Korea. He has had solo exhibits at McColl Center for the Visual Arts in Charlotte, NC., and the Stamp Gallery at the University of Maryland. He has participated in numerous prestigious residencies and exhibits, including venues such as Scorses Sculpture Park, the Lower East Side Printshop, Smack Mellon and the Studio Program at the Elizabeth foundation.*



Hong Seon Jang
Parasite
Match sticks, glue
Location: Gallery 1

Noah Klersfeld

The Chain-link Fence

The Chain-link Fence (chain-link fence, pedestrians, vehicles, sunlight) depicts a chain-link fence that has undergone a temporal reconfiguration weaving together the activities taking place at a busy traffic intersection during the morning commute in New York City. The single channel work is comprised of 734 individual video tracks with each track corresponding to a void in the fence. *The Chain-link Fence* is part of a larger series of work titled *Towards a Disdain for Daily Rituals* in which I act upon the architectural patterns that passively bear witness to daily ritualistic behavior.

Contact: www.noahklersfeld.com

Noah Klersfeld is an artist and architect living and working in New York City. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts and Bachelor of Architecture degrees from the Rhode Island School of Design. He has recently exhibited work at Side Street Projects, Pharmaka Gallery and The Cirrus Gallery (Los Angeles), The Centre of Contemporary Culture (Barcelona) and The Kustera Tilton Gallery and Invisible Dog Gallery (New York City). His recent screenings include The SIMULTAN06 Video and Media Arts Festival (Romania), The 2010 Performance Intermedia Festival (Poland) and the 16th Annual Chicago Underground Film Festival (Chicago). His piece "Payroll" has been on two national tours and has received awards from the Center on Contemporary Arts (Seattle WA) and the ASU Film and Video Festival (Tempe AZ). Noah recently completed a video commission with collaborator Patty Chang at the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and is working now on a permanent installation with the 92nd street Y in downtown Manhattan.



Noah Klersfeld
The Chain-link Fence 2010
from the series *Towards a Disdain for Daily Rituals*
Video Installation
Location: Gallery 6

Community Tree

Frozen in Time: Behind the Scenes

Each year, the staff at the Carriage House installs a community tree to anchor our *TreeMendous* exhibit. The theme of each tree is selected with a nod to the annual zeitgeist, which seems particularly volatile this year. Whether it is the economy, the government or global warming, instability and uncertainty are very much in the air as 2011 comes to a close. Ice, as a medium, seemed the perfect embodiment of the ephemeral and changing quality of everyday life. Its elemental nature never changes—it is always water—but its forms are fluid. Outside forces such as temperature, pressure and gravity are the factors that determine whether H₂O remains stable or transmutes into steam and ice.

My plan was to install a forest of real trees in Gallery 4, each facing a replica of itself in hand-carved ice. The focal point of the installation was to be an eight foot ice tree that matched a slender pine more than 12 feet high. Inherent in the Carriage House process-based mission is an understanding that not all artistic endeavors go according to plan—and this one didn't. The ice trees arrived for installation on the day of our *TreeMendous* reception, a day of record high temperatures on Long Island. While the smaller trees presented no particular problems of placement, the larger tree began to slide across the floor as soon as it was off-loaded from its refrigerated van. Tipping precariously forward, lurching through puddles of water in unexpected directions, the tree became a lethal hazard that we envisioned crashing down on the hundreds of visitors who would attend our tree lighting in just a few short hours.

And so we all took hammers and smashed more than a ton of ice to the ground, then slid huge chunks of it out the back door before our guests arrived. What remained, and what the public saw, was an ice forest that melted slowly--and beautifully--in the late afternoon sun and disappeared by the next day. As is true of all installation art that defies replication, you had to be there.

In the case of our *Frozen In Time* creation, you had to be there before you had to be there... SK



Sara Kinsey
Frozen In Time
Installation detail
Pine Trees, Ice sculptures, mixed media
Location: Gallery #4

Some Thoughts, 20 years Later...

In January, the Carriage House Workspace will celebrate its 20th anniversary. It is a fitting time to reflect on what we do here, and why what we do is important.

Each year, an average of 25 artists complete residencies here, many of which result in site-specific installations that are on exhibit in the Carriage House for several months. Installation art emerged in the 60's as a way to counter the commercial aspects of art and the fetishization of art objects. Installations are not easily purchased and exist only as documentation once exhibits end. A half century later, installation art and site-specific projects take on an even more critical dimension. In our age of mechanical reproduction on steroids, when everything and everyone enjoys eternal life on Facebook, site-specific art at the Carriage House is—above all—art that must be experienced in person. Photographs, web postings, YouTube clips cannot capture or memorialize these works. The projects our residents create require engagement in real time and real space. They demand presence. It is not a stretch to see this art form, which celebrates the unique and ephemeral, as a metaphor for our own position as living beings—and a reminder that we are more than facsimiles on our blogs and webpages.

Twenty years ago, few people believed that artists, like scientists, needed vehicles for research and experimentation—yet artists have always functioned as vanguards of social development. Through work that is equal parts critique and compassion, they point us toward a more humanistic future. They are as necessary to the survival of our culture as medicine and technology.

Twenty years ago, workspaces for artists were rarities, if nonexistent. Today, thanks to support from agencies like the New York State Council on the Arts, they are growing and expanding. The Carriage House is “artist centered.” We offer our artists funds, time and space to experiment with ideas, media and techniques. We ask only that they expand their creative potential through deep engagement with their artistic practice. We are a founding member of the New York State Artists Workspace Consortium, a group of ten agencies that together offer tremendous opportunities and support for young, emerging artists in every discipline. Look us up on our website, www.NYSAWC.org, and feel our energy. We look forward to our next twenty years and to ever-improving services and support for our residents. MLC



the
Carriage
House



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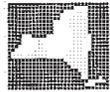
The staff would like to thank the artists for their participation in *TreeMendous '11* in the Carriage House.

The Carriage House is a workspace for artists administered by Heart For Art, Inc., a nonprofit agency dedicated to promoting the arts on Long Island. The Carriage House site is owned by the Town of Islip.

The Carriage House collaborates with the Islip Art Museum and the Islip Arts Council. All organizations are located in the Brookwood Hall park complex in East Islip, NY.

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Slate of the Arts



NYSCA

Workspace programs at the Carriage House are made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency. The Carriage House is a founding member of the New York State Artist Workspace Consortium.

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