



Unwind from the Daily Grind!

Travel tips, sneak peaks, special events, and first hand travel destination information... around the corner, up the street and around the county

About Janet Serra

Beauty and Ruin: Broken Landscapes, Lost Symbols at the Silvermine Arts Center

Posted on November 24, 2014 | By Janet Serra



Beauty and Ruin: Broken Landscapes, Lost Symbols is the name of the show at the Silvermine Art Center located on 1037 Silvermine Road in New Cannan that runs through December 23. The focus of the show is the work of three artists that explore three themes in photography, sculpture, and a site-dependent work that includes video as a primary element.

“The Hand of Man,” J Henry Fair - J Henry Fair’s stunning abstract compositions are full of organic forms and graphic patterns: plumes, branches, rivulets, as well as grids and softened geometric forms. But in Fair’s large-scale photographs, beauty and horror coexist. Fair’s subject in “The Hand of Man” is a damaged environment: de-forested landscapes, polluted waterways, hydraulic fracturing sites, and waste from refinery operations and other industrial practices. His goal is to “produce beautiful images that stimulate an aesthetic response, then curiosity, then personal involvement.”



J Henry Fair Plume of foam in bauxite waste from aluminum refinery Darrow, Louisiana

“Flying over these sites is the only way to see things,” Fair has said. “The aerial perspective is inherently intriguing to land-based animals.” It is the aerial view that is his particular angle of vision—the distant view, not of the peaceful blue planet, but of the compromised landscape of a world that even in the digital era is still predominantly industrial.

J Henry Fair’s photography has been the subject of solo exhibitions throughout the U.S. and in Norway, Germany, and the Netherlands. His work has been featured or reviewed in the [New York Times](#), [Vanity Fair](#), [Smithsonian Magazine](#), [New York Magazine](#), [Harper’s](#), and [National Geographic](#). He has served as an artist-in-residence at Swarthmore, Dartmouth, Colorado College, and the Cooper Union, and his work is in a number of permanent collections including the Cooper Union and Dartmouth’s Hood Museum. Fair has been a member of the Silvermine Guild of Artists since 2011.

“Neo-Archaism,” Carlos Davila- Carlos Davila creates a visual landscape that abstracts the symbols and forms of ancient cultures and combines them with those of advanced technology and modern industry. He explores the relationship between the modern, highly mechanized age that we live in and a totemic, stylized symbolism of a variety of ancient cultures from Egypt, South America, and Africa. Davila abstracts line, form, and color to create sculptures, three-dimensional wall pieces, and large-scale diptychs and triptychs. His mechanical and industrial elements coalesce into a layered, three-dimensional geometry that is textural and drenched in brilliant color. His is a figurative landscape at once familiar and alien.

After earning his MFA, Davila participated in the reconstruction of the ancient city of Chan Chan, Peru. His work at this Pre-Columbian archaeological dig led to a fascination with ancient and lost cultures, and the experience profoundly affected the course of his work.

Carlos Davila's art has been the subject of solo exhibitions from Lima, Santiago, and Bogota to New York, Boston, and Miami. He has work in the permanent collections of Yale University's Richard Brown Baker Collection, the National Arts Club in New York City, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, and dozens of international corporations.

Born and educated in Lima, Peru, he lived for many years in New York City. He currently lives in Ridgefield, Connecticut, and maintains a studio in a loft in Bridgeport. He has been a member of the Silvermine Guild of Artists since 2012.

"What's Left," June Ahrens- In her recent work, June Ahrens has explored repurposed and broken glass as material and metaphor. "What's Left" is a new turn for Ahrens—a unified environment made up of a video surrounded by blue walls that are layered with a combination of dried pigment mixed with salt. This site-dependent piece, created for the Hays Gallery at the Silvermine Arts Center, evokes loss and fragility while channeling light through a landscape of broken glass.



Still from video

The video serves as the primary element in the composition and contains many of the materials used in her environment. The integration of materials and images (including images of a human face and hands) invites the viewer to explore and embrace the residue of lives. Salt and glass enhance the imperfections of the walls, which become a metaphor for the imperfections in each of us. The surface partially hides some of the scarring but salt and pigment reveal it in a new way. Repurposed broken glass (clear or blue) is also part of the installation—random patterns of fallen shards will pool and reflect danger, pain, and vulnerability.

June Ahrens's work has been exhibited at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City; at the Edinburgh College of Art in Scotland; in "Strong Women Artists," a group exhibit in Matera, Italy; and in many other exhibitions throughout the U.S. She was nominated for a 2012 Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant and was a recipient of a grant from the NEA. She was honored by the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism as a Distinguished Advocate for the Arts and as an Individual Artist. She lives in New Canaan, Connecticut, and has been a member of the Silvermine Guild since 1993.

Silvermine Arts Center is one of the oldest artist communities in the United States. Its five-acre campus in New Canaan, Connecticut, consists of a nationally renowned artist guild, an award-winning school of art offering classes for all ages, an arts and fine crafts shop, and a gallery offering over twenty contemporary and historic exhibitions annually. Silvermine is a non-profit organization that also offers an educational outreach program, Art Partners, and hosts lectures, performances, film screenings, and special events.

Gallery Hours: Silvermine Galleries are open Wednesday through Saturday, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call (203) 966-9700 ext. 20 or visit the website: www.silvermineart.org.