

## Gallery Guide

### Impact

We are delighted to present *Impact*, an exhibition of art that addresses the issue of the environmental impact of human's use and abuse of the earth. The artists Brad Temkin, Cydney M. Lewis, Sandi Miot and Helen Dannelly (these last two partnering in *The Coral Project*) seek to explore various aspects of the issues of climate change, pollution and sustainability through their works. The idea of the title *Impact* comes not only from the fact that these socially engaged artists raise awareness of these issues, but from the conviction that as individuals, all of our actions cause consequences for others. These artists consciously choose to draw attention to how our actions as decision-making human beings affect the larger universe. Their creative practice has a social impact on our behaviors, while they address the impact of human intervention on the earth.

Brad Temkin, who has recently been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for his work, uses the medium of photography to look at man's use of land. The works shown here are from his *Topographic Tales* series, looking at sparsely populated landscapes and how mankind has left its scars. His works provide documentary evidence of human impact, whether through cutting the land, leaving debris, or even creating a man-made structure that appears out of place in its natural environment. The places presented seem remote, and yet each has been impacted by the hand of man. His work, *Topographic No. 17*, focuses on the extended wire structure that abuts what seems to be a landscape of strip-mining. We feel a sense of discomfort at the manmade cage appearing in a landscape, especially because the landscape seems to be unfortunately altered by man. While most of these works do not reveal actual "abuse" of the land, they present the subtle and at times, not so subtle impact that humans have when they alter landscape for their own use.

Temkin's more recent projects include *Rooftops*, which document the urban phenomenon of rooftop gardens, where contemporary urban dwellers are attempting to mitigate the impact of climate change caused by the "heat islands" of cities. His poetic photographs draw attention to the greening of our urban environments through responsible planning and planting.

Cydney M. Lewis takes a different tactic in her work to focus on our overuse of materials that can impact the earth through their lack of destructibility. She uses recycled materials in her works, utilizing plastic bags, wire and throw-away objects to create works of great imagination. Lewis has used plastic bags to create detailed jewelry and body adornments, subverting our expectations of materials that usually wind up in landfills. The materials are transformed from being detritus to objects of value and beauty. Her works are derived from an urban environment of discard; the final impact is ironic in its ability for transformation and hope.

Sandi Miot and Helen Dannelly are collaborating on The Coral Project, works that reflect on the impact of global warming on our oceans' corals. Dannelly began work on a coral series after viewing the film Chasing Coral, a film that shows the adverse impact of the rising temperatures of oceans. The world's coral reefs are dying and disappearing, made evidence by the bleaching of world coral. Coral is dying at an unprecedented rate, as carbon emissions warm the seas. Dannelly and Miot graphically portray in most poetic terms the turning of colorful healthy coral into bleached dying organisms. Their work calls attention to the need for action against global warming. Through elegant and compelling organic forms created with encaustic, these artists create a plea for attention to this crucial climate issue

All four of the artists exhibited here impact our understanding of our important role as citizens to take action in response to climate change. We must reinvigorate our relationship to the land as one of responsibility, respect and nurturing. Just as these artists have chosen through their work to make an impact, we too, can, with our conscious choices, make a positive impact on our world.