

inspection was found to be made of dryer lint.

Lisa Kereszi couched her fears in matchboxes. John Drury set up embellished mousetraps in an ode to Mondrian. Matt Dilling spoke of romance in the neon window light that read simply, "I Miss You." The TV in the living room screened a looped series of video shorts. Most were subverted commercials for home products.

Some artists imposed themselves on the curator's very personal space. Justin King embedded a light switch in Feuer's low red couch. Cynthia Underwood invaded his bathroom privacy with the recorded sound of her moaning, "I love you baby, I need you." Pam Larsen-Kaneli filled a drawer under his bed with raspberry Jello (art that soon developed mold and had to be evacuated before the end of the show). There was even a voyeuristic element: a video camera positioned to observe from close up the goings-on at a residence seen through the trees from Feuer's bedroom window.

The aura of the exhibition was overwhelmingly nostalgic. Much of the work recalled the kitsch decor of grandparents' houses—crocheted doilies, ceramic figurines and wall decorations, refrigerator magnets, snow globes, and family portraits. Many evoked childhood-chewed plastic figures, recorded lullabies in the bedroom, night lights. Without exception, every one expressed longing for the bygone days before digital "conveniences" and mass production.

Presented outside the museum and gallery context, "The Apartment Show" made a humorous and timely contribution to the current discourse about the accessibility of contemporary art. When Feuer publicly invited visitors to "stop by, sit and have a cup of tea...with these compelling household artworks," he effectively erased the gap between art and public understanding.

"The Apartment Show" will relocate to Miami in spring 2000, with two locations: the Boston show at Locust Projects and a second exhibition in a rented apartment where local artists can respond to the concept. From there, the exhibition will move to New York's Vacancy Gallery.

—Cathy Byrd

St. Louis

"The Japanese Aesthetic" "Baskets and Beyond"

R. Duane Reed Gallery
Craft Alliance
Craft and sculpture were linked in "Innovations in Textile Art III," held at 11 venues. Fiber artist and American Craft Council President Jane Sauer curated two of the exhibitions with notable sculptural ambitions. "The Japanese Aesthetic" at the R. Duane Reed Gallery included Hisako Sekijima, Noriko Takamiya, Masako Yoshida, Mika Watanabe, and Kazue Homna. "Baskets and

Beyond" at the Craft Alliance gallery included Ann Hall-Richards, Barbara Cooper, and Soon Ran Youn. Both exhibitions featured artists whose innovative techniques and forms both engage and surprise viewers.

The works in "The Japanese Aesthetic" have a tempered delicacy and value harmony with nature. Sauer's brief essay notes that these artists eliminate their own identities in favor of universal expression and use their technical mastery to reveal the integrity of natural materials.

Hisako Sekijima, who has studied in Tokyo, the United States, and France, is a pioneer in sculptural approaches to basketmaking. She uses unconventional materials such as hackberry and ginger. Her *Fittings III* (#445) is a 9-by-12.5-by-5.75-inch construction in cherry and maple. An irregular weave of thin ribbons of cherry bark forms a diamond-shaped basket with two deep pockets. The bark

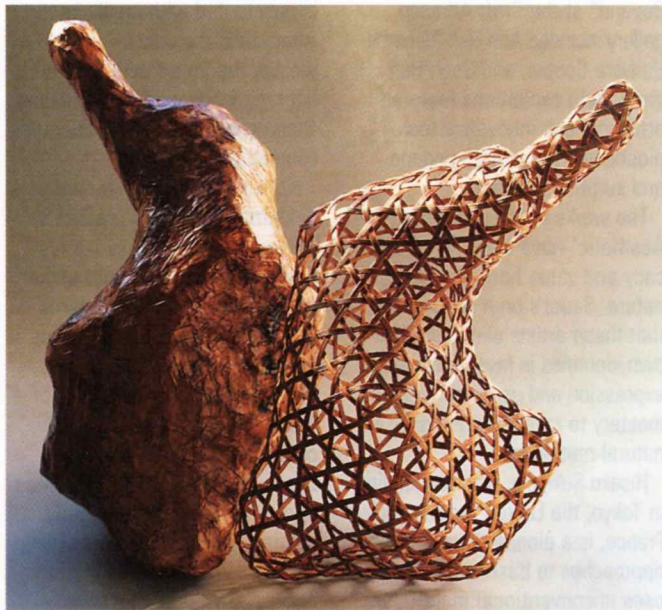
is punctuated with maple knots. Altogether, the unusual, irregular weave, the form's dark body with light markings, and the intriguing shape constitute a study in interconnections.

Noriko Takamiya, a student of Sekijima's, presently teaches in Tokyo. Her *Volutions* series features variations on processes of plaiting, in which the material is layered upon itself. Her three pieces, one each in bark, vine, and paper, employ variations of the cross and spiral. The bark cross is a double X, composed of a layer of darkly colored, plaited bark wrapped around a lightly colored, plaited bark core. The density and intensity of the form conveys a visceral message.

Masako Yoshida's minimal woven forms have strong personalities and quirky appendages.

Barbara Cooper, *Pomme*, 1998.
Wood and bronze, 30 x 28 x 20 in.





Above: Kazue Honma, *Chiral—B*, 1998. Paper strips, persimmon tannin, and paper, two elements, 8 x 8 x 12 in. each. Top right: Marcia Widenor, *Dark Nest*, 1996. Mixed media, 39 x 11 x 5 in. Right: *Abandoned Nest*, 1996. Mixed media, 36 x 30 x 12 in.

She uses beautiful materials indigenous to Japan such as akebi, walnut, and tuki. Yoshida's processes unite organic, ritualistic, and contemporary practices.

Mika Watanabe's *Assurance IV* is a 5-by-17-by-5-inch double form of transparent and opaque kozo fiber. In contrast to a related form with biomorphic protuberances, this work is a transparent blue sheath resembling a corn husk with woven eggs clustered in the center. The work's delicacy is not precious and conveys clear thought about vision and touch.

Kazue Honma uses humor and craft to turn paper and string into strong, light, and flexible materials. Her *Chiral—B*, a pair of ingeniously plaited and woven chicken legs and thighs, is accompanied by equally incredible abstract forms.

At Craft Alliance, the mood is more experimental and American. Ann Hall-Richards created *Passages* to symbolize the fragility of existence and the crisis, at age

24, when she gave birth and lost her husband. The vessel, created from cast paper, twined waxed linen, wrapping, and beads, has a partly burnt lower surface that reveals a tight weave underneath. Beading connects the lower and upper surfaces, and other design elements express interwoven lives and new growth. The artist has an unusual approach: "I first form my pieces in clay and create a plaster mold in which I cast my handmade paper. The weavings are warped to the paper surface, then twined, embellished, and the surface worked." Her influences include ritual art and funerary objects.

Barbara Cooper builds forms by covering scrap metal such as car mufflers and exhaust pipes with thin layers of wood veneer. The form evolves "the way an oyster creates a pearl" and is intended to represent the regeneration of a cast-off, human-made object into an organic form. Without pedestals, the forms sit on their haunches and bellies, balancing between being purely abstract and bearing subconscious similarities to signs of life: hearts, buttocks, limbs.

Soon Ran Youn's work—the most realistic and emotionally-charged in these exhibitions—is created primarily from knotted

white cotton string. Her elongated figures, hanging in space or crouching inside a silkscreen light box in *Island II*, are intense explorations of the mind/body conundrum. Her figures suggest isolation, flight, interior worlds, and existential states of being. Youn states, "I have mostly used linear materials, such as thread and wire, to look for the structural possibilities from solidity to transparency... I am interested in transfiguring a line into a face, and even further, a three-dimensional form, rather than simply revealing the characteristic nature of the line." She sees art as a way to deepen self-realization and define life.

—Jan Garden Castro

New York

Marcia Widenor

OIA (Organization of Independent Artists)

Marcia Widenor's exhibition "Nesting" presented a collection of sculptural nests made with a



variety of materials ranging from fiber to steel, along with some mixed-media drawings of nests. Such an exhibition of small pieces focused on a specific theme works well in the compact "white cube" gallery space in front of OIA's fourth-floor offices. Widenor's objects were placed on pedestals or hung from the

