

TERRY ALBRIGHT



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THE SKINNER GALLERY

Heritage On The Garden

63 Park Plaza

Boston MA

July 30 - August 14, 2015

Monday - Friday

10am - 5pm

So you know...

SO YOU KNOW... celebrates the past thirty-five years of Terry Albright sculpting. This show is primarily for her friends, family and, especially, her grandchildren.

The idea developed over many discussions with Andrew Witkin. Karen Keane's offer of the Skinner Gallery as a venue has made it a reality. Trevor Fairbrother's essay TERRY reflects much on her artistic life and character. Jock Reynolds suggestion of showing her work with her husband's love of surfaces ties their passions of many years together.

This exhibition is a way of acknowledging Massachusetts College of Art and Artists for Humanity for the role they play in developing creativity and training artists. All sale proceeds will be donated to them.



Terry

TREVOR FAIRBROTHER

Terry's invitation to write for her book is the happy opportunity to visit the story of how a male couple – John T. Kirk and I – came to know and to love her. Terry - Terry Albright, alias Terry Keppel Albright, alias Mrs. Richard Albright. She is half of “Dick and Terry,” a rare pairing that is a blessing to John and me.

It began four decades ago: John and I encountered Dick in 1975 when he took John's seminar on Early American Furniture at Boston University. We soon met Terry at their hilltop home in the country, and friendship has reigned. It sounds overly broad, but our various ongoing connections and projects together take root during meals together, talking about art, furniture, living spaces, plants and gardens.

When it was time to interview Terry and make plans for this essay I instinctively, thought about one Albright family photograph that I love. Whenever at their eccentric 1903 Shingle-style house I always visit the picture in its lair-like setting: a

crazily shaped lavatory, ingeniously tucked beneath a staircase and reached by way of the coatroom in the entrance hall. The photograph, set off by an old gold frame, depicts Dick and Terry and their three sons on the nearby lawn. Terry sits at the center, radiant and content in the summer evening, holding a document and wearing a cap and gown; Dick stands behind her, thoughtful and smartly clad; and the sleepy boys, wearing pajamas, flank their mother. The picture pays its respects to



the Victorian tradition of formal, ceremonial portraits that honor important occasions, but it breaks that mold with a sixties sense of freedom. It intrigues me because it shows an Albright family event that occurred before John and I met them. I savor this quirky and delightful picture as a

nostalgic period piece: it gives me a whiff of the heroic coolness of Bonnie and Clyde, the drive of Mrs. Robinson, and the happy moments in Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.

I needed to hear Terry talk about this ar-

resting image, and I learned that she, an only child, was thirty when she received her undergraduate degree. In her late teens, she surprised herself and others by halting her preparations to go to college on the west coast and opting to marry Dick. They started their family when he was a graduate student at Harvard Business School. Determined to earn a degree, Terry took classes at Harvard University Extension School one night a week for ten years. Terry's parents were extremely proud when the remarkable scholastic marathon ended, and her father requested a picture to commemorate the graduation. Turning to Lisa de Roeth, a good friend who was an amateur photographer, Terry, Dick and Lisa worked together to stage the group portrait I love so much. Ironically, Terry's father was dismayed by what he took to be a prankish response, but in time he came to understand and appreciate it.

Terry's emergence as an artist was as extended, circumstance-laden and challenging as her pursuit of that degree. Her awareness of and interest in art was there from the beginning. Her paternal great-grandfather, Frederick Keppel, was a New York gallery-owner who published prints, wrote books about etching, and championed James Abbott McNeill Whistler; moreover, her businessman father served on the Board of Trustees of the Museum of Modern Art as Treasurer. As a young mother in the suburbs Terry first explored her creativity by taking classes in clay art. Eventually she developed a practice of making portrait heads of friends, neighbors and seniors. When she decided to go to art school that undertaking had to be weighed against her commitments as wife and mother. She entered Massachusetts College of Art as

a fulltime student in the sculpture program in 1978, and, at the age of forty, graduated four years later. Her choice of Mass. Art was game and surprising, for it is a large institution with a youthful, economically and socially diverse student population. As a well-to-do sophisticated woman Terry would doubtless have been more "comfortable" at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the costlier and less edgy institution down the street. She remains a loyal supporter of Mass. Art because she learned there in the bluntest ways that the professional art world is a rough and wounding place.

The ostensible fate after graduating in 1982 was to return to being "just a housewife;" but Terry's inner voice affirmed her need to "make things out of nothing," for she had become an artist. It took time, nonetheless, to find a personal vision and to beat a path into the local art scene. Overall it may have been less intensely harrowing than the Mass. Art experience, but it cannot have been easy. By the early 1990s a few of her works had been shown in juried exhibitions. The objects that drew critical interest were non-figurative biomorphic sculptures assembled from natural sources. The forms she created resonated intimately with the materials from which they were made: the reaching and wrapping of branches, grasses, and vines, the swelling and enclosing of pods and gourds.

Terry had long known that nature and the outdoor world are crucial to her wellbeing. The first few years of married life were citified, but at the age of twenty-three she persuaded Dick to quit the Boston-Cambridge milieu for an old house tucked into a woodland setting. The interior of their home became Dick's realm, and increasingly it reflected their friendships with collectors and critics devoted to Color Field painting. Terry raised the boys and imaginatively

shaped different outdoor spaces with quince trees, shrubs, flowers and herbs.

The evolution from active gardener to sculptor working with natural materials ushered in a new chapter on the Albrights' domestic front. After her sculpture won recognition on the local art scene Dick wanted to bring it into their living spaces. Terry's feminist friends in the art world argued that he should be treated like any other collector and therefore purchase his wife's art. Since that shift, in the mid-nineties, Dick has been her most loyal collector. "I wanted him to have what he wanted and I was flattered," Terry recalls. "Now, I get to live with those pieces, and I win because they are all so well placed."

In a recent discussion about the artists she most admires at this point in her life she names two women and two men, all sculptors. Both women – Eva Hesse and Louise Bourgeois – produced radical work that inspired the emerging feminist movement; they used unconventional materials and explored drawing in exceptional ways. The men – Anthony Caro and Ken Price – were very different figures; the former made airy, rhythmic abstract compositions in metal, the latter used clay, traditionally considered a craft medium, to make idiosyncratic and modestly scaled painted objects.

Visiting the Albrights today is an opportunity to experience richly layered interior and exterior spaces that the couple has slowly shaped and embellished:

sculpture made by Terry exists in the context of art and furniture gathered by Dick. Connections abound: the surfaces of Terry's works interact with those of the worn early American painted furniture that Dick loves. Her sculptures occupy an array of places. Whether wall-hung, poised on a table or chest, or boldly controlling a room or a quiet nook, the objects sing nature's mysterious appeal.

There is one large work that John Kirk has long admired. It sits outdoors, at a slight remove from the house, edging into the landscape. Its weathered



gray wooden surface could easily be mistaken for stone; indeed it seems to emerge from the ground as a boulder might. This sculpture reminds John that Terry's love of the forms and surfaces of nature has expressed itself over the years in two ways. It imbues her marvelous gardens and achieves a heightened state in her art. "I have long delighted," he states, "in how Terry extracts from her surroundings plant fibers, branches, bark fragments, and gourds and allows them to be themselves while asking them to be part of something new. She requires them to give up some of their characteristics; curved

bark becomes part of a larger flatter plane, and vines entwine differently as Terry creates a work of art that has a conscious stance." ■

Sarah Baker Stories

“So You Know...” A RETROSPECTIVE BY TERRY ALBRIGHT

POSTED ON NOVEMBER 11, 2015 www.sarahbakerstories.com

It always starts with a dream. In the first one, she and her father have to retrieve a dead baby from the bottom of a well. As she matures as an artist, the baby begins to look like her middle son, my husband, as a toddler. He no longer needs to be rescued. Now he just needs tending to—to be fed, or warmed, or to have his diaper changed. But it’s always obvious to her that this child in her dream has been neglected. It’s a sign, a “sweet signal from her unconscious,” she says, that it’s time to get back to work.

And work she does. For the last 35 years, Terry Albright has gone to her studio daily from 9 am to noon. She knows that by showing up art will get made.

Her most recent show, “So You Know...” and the one she says will be her last, was at Skinner’s Auction House in Boston. The second floor of this open, bright gallery space was testament to Albright’s dedication and talent. Each sculpture was thoughtfully arranged often times on antique furniture, as it would have been seen in someone’s home.

Most of Albright’s sculptures evoke images found in nature. But these are not driftwood pieces you’d find in a kitschy seaside shop. Albright transforms

Mother Nature’s bounty into stunning abstract compositions.

Her earlier pieces, usually constructed out of bittersweet vine, bark or grasses, are large and striking. There’s “Whisk,” made of phragmites and rawhide, and inspired by her hair. It’s an oversized pony tail—in the vein of Claes Oldenburg—but organic, feminine, and delicate. And “Twirl” an intertwined, trunk-like construction of pine bark is reminiscent of a tête-à-tête chair or two contra dancers the moment their eyes catch before they spin down the line.

After working with bark for over a decade,

Albright saw some giant gourds growing out of her friend’s compost pile on Cape Cod. Their curves caught her attention. She started growing her own. She’d harvest, dry and cure them in her garage. She would then cut, stain and fasten these moldy, pungent “shards” as she calls them into refined and polished sculptures.

“Ripple” is a massing of blonde-colored gourd shards fastened with the lightest touches giving the sculpture a weightless feel. It evokes a pile of seaweed but is elegant and graceful. “Tarbaby”—made of

tree-grown gourds from the Dominican Republic—could be a tower of black mussels clinging



to a rock. It is totemic and airy. In “Bloom” the leather-dye stained shards seem to float and arc like Henri Matisse’s dancers in “La Danse.”

Albright committed herself to becoming a fine artist later in life. She started at Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Mass Art, when she was 36 years old. Before that she’d been busy raising her three sons and completing her undergraduate degree from Harvard University’s Extension School. Mass Art was a commuter school with much younger students and “lots of attitude” she says. She’d sit in the back of class and not make waves. The other students were hungry—they’d come from schools where they were the best artists. “I was Lady Bountiful who was being supported by my husband,” she said, “I lived in a suburb.”

To prove herself, she knew that she needed to start working. She thought, “If I don’t take these next years and start working on my own it’s all going to be, Oh Yah, I did that four years ago.” She said too many women do that. They don’t stick with their plans.

So she forced herself to. She had a studio and made herself go in there and be an artist—even if she didn’t feel like one.

Her first project was called, “Mountain of Seven Deadly Sins”—a six-foot-high sculpture inspired by Pieter Bruegel’s “Tower of Babel.” This large mountain made by dripping semi-hardened plaster over chicken wire, and bittersweet and wisteria vines was fitted with alcoves and clay figures of Sloth, Greed, Envy, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, and Pride. It took over a year to build. She displayed it at her local church. When she brought it home it was too

big to get into the house. She put it outside where it fell over in a storm and broke. She took it to the dump.

Then in 1987, after an operation, she couldn’t make art for six months. But she made herself go to her studio every day. She kept a notebook. She set a time limit. “You are going to stay here. I don’t care what you are going to do but you are going to stay here,” she said to herself. She realized, later, that it was in those six months—and the commitment of going to her studio—when she finally thought of herself as an artist.

Since then she has been exhibited in galleries and museums all over Massachusetts, New York City and Paris including numerous solo shows as a member of Boston Sculptor’s Gallery.

Albright’s newest sculptures are also made of gourd shards but instead of being ethereal, like her earlier ones, these are opaque and biomorphic. “Birth” is an unformed being wrestling its way into shape. “Screech” could be a creature stepping out of the primordial soup stretching its limbs—made from the neck of the gourd—and reaching for the light. Both demonstrate the evolution of Albright’s vision—one that continues to emerge and re-form.

When Albright’s been productive, and working in the studio, she doesn’t have the baby dream. It’s only when she has not been feeding her artistic self that the dream appears. So when she has it, she finds a way back into her studio and starts working. When asked which artists inspire her she responds, “People who just go do it.” ■

Andrew Witkin Review

JULY 30, 2012

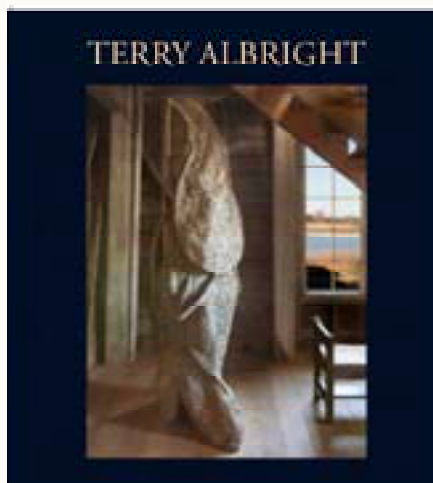
Albright graduated MassArt in 1982 but she has been admiring, examining and observing natural materials for far longer. Emanating from this interest, Albright has built an artistic practice at the intersection of the natural and the fabricated.

To make her works, along with traditional adhesives, paints and supports, she has used materials found in the wild, purchased from farmers and, most significantly, grown herself; this forms the heart of the works currently on display.

When one grows something, one has to pay close attention and continuously question - How much water is it getting? How much sun is it getting? Is it growing? Is it shrinking? Is its development complete? Is there more to come? These create a relationship and situation where the grower - in this case Albright - knows her material.

This knowledge gives her the ability and confidence to sculpt with complete awareness. Certain sculptures have moments where the form is an echo of its previous life (*Dwelling*, 1993), or the materials are left almost fully as they were (*Tower*, 2003), and thus the materials are instantly legible. Other works are

altered beyond recognition, either through cutting, reassembly and painting (*Screech*, 2014) or sensitive reforming and decontextualization (*No Peripheral Vision*, 2002). The techniques used in these works form the cornerstones of Albright's practice by showing the respect paid both to the natural materials and the boundless possibilities of the creative mind.



Staunchly placed between the extremes of these techniques are the works that form the bulk of the past decade of work - "shards" (as Albright calls them) of gourds. Some of the gourds' surfaces are preserved, others have been superficially treated and some deeply altered. Some sit on pedestals, others hang on walls. Some are solid, stolid and dense. Others are incredibly light, open and full of undulations. In all of these, the gourds are legible as gourds, yet have new lives. Albright has respected their pasts, imbued them with her vision and, now with this exhibition, set them forth into the world.

Albright's work is full of control, respect and serenity, and simultaneously conveys creativity, inquisitiveness, inventiveness, joy and liveliness. ■

Cate McQuaid Review

ALBRIGHT'S MEANINGS, METAPHORS
BOSTON GLOBE, AUGUST 12, 2015

Sculptor Terry Albright has cleaned out her studio to mount a benefit exhibition up through Aug. 14 at Skinner Boston Gallery, with proceeds going to Massachusetts College of Art and Design and Artists for Humanity.

Albright works with natural materials. At a time when so many exhibitions focus on humanity pitted against nature, this artist reminds us to collaborate with it. Her sculptures have a mystical quality; they appear to have sprung from the earth into full-blown meaning and metaphor.

Yet Albright's conceptual touch is light. She concerns herself with line, texture, and rhythm. The pieces she makes out of homegrown gourds, sliced and pieced back together and covered with leather dye or paint, might be traces that dancers leave in their wake. The elegant "Bloom" curls, swells, and bends around itself in

thick tendrils the color of cherry wood.

Lately, the artist has been piecing the gourds together into more solid structures. "Screech," painted black with red speckles, looks part insect, part mammal, with its back slumped and three straight legs stretched before it. Albright has installed many of her works on antique furniture to deepen context. "Screech" sits on a scuffed tabletop like a cat settling into the sun.

For "Twirl" she shaped rugged bark into a 3-D figure eight, opening and eddying outward — graceful motion again, here wrought from material we associate with stillness. "Whisk" binds dried grass in a triangular form, like a giant, shaggy broom strung on a nail with twine. Pieces such as these, outsize yet humble, have the

quality of a Zen garden, cultivating grace with nature. Sit among them, and be. ■





Wrestling Jacob 1990
bittersweet vine, bark
24 x 48 x 14"

Spring 1995
bittersweet bark
95 x 43 x 32"





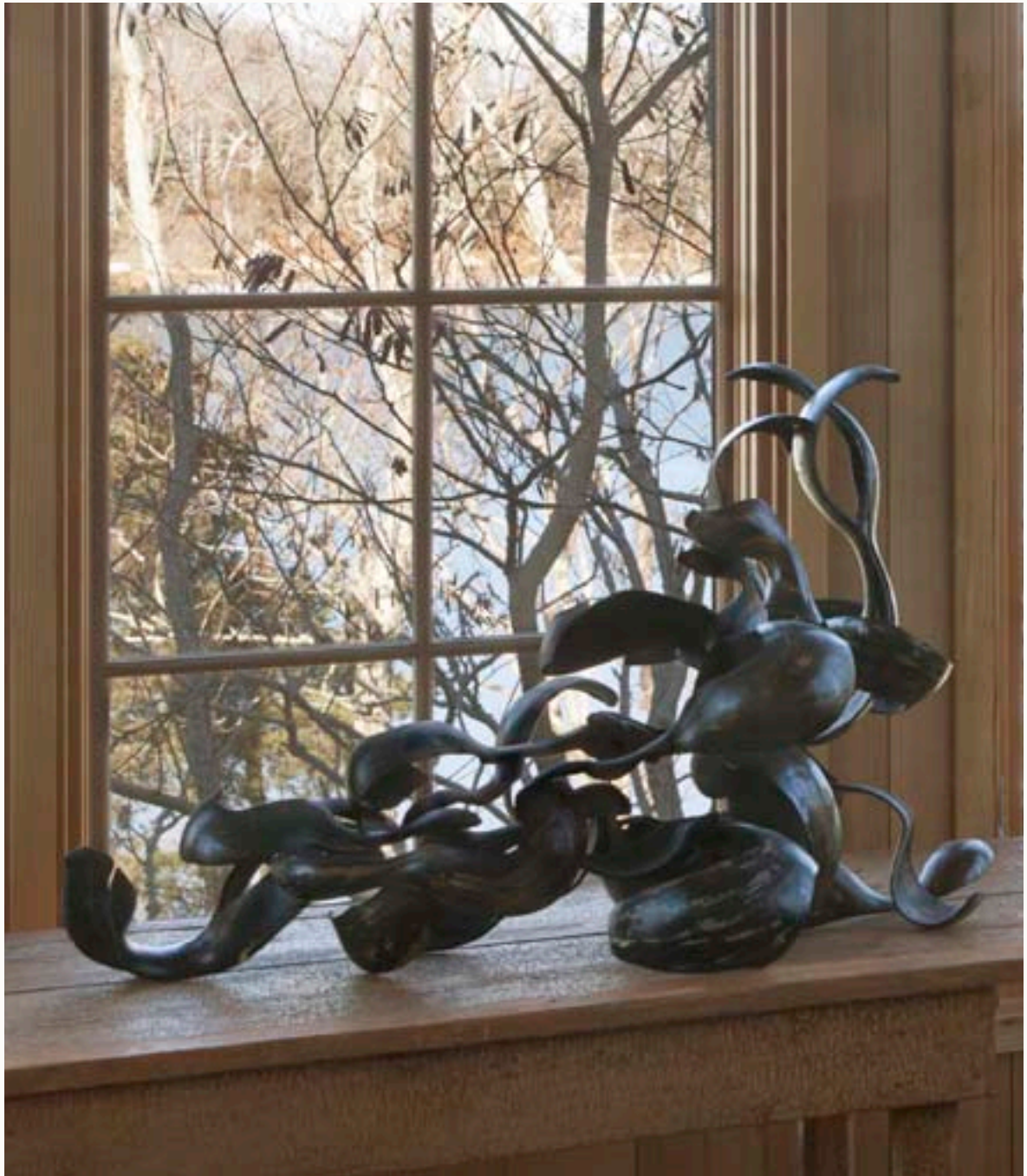
Twirl 1997
pine bark
40 x 64 x 44"

Whisk 2001
phragmites, rawhide
53 x 45 x 11"





Ancestor 2010
gourds
15 x 30 x 17"



Stance 2010
gourds
20 x 32 x 14"





Slip Sliding 2010
gourds
24 x 11 x 14"



Armory 1992
grapevine, eucalyptus bark
64 x 24 x 10"

Bump 2008
gourds
19 x 13 x 9"





Bloom 2008
gourds
30 x 24 x 26"



Molt 2005
gourds
20 x 20 x 13"



Collide 2008
gourds
12 x 26 x 22"



Greek Vase 2005
gourds
18 x 15 x 13"





Ripple 2010-14
gourds
16 x 36 x 16"



Coiled 2011
gourds
7 x 25 x 10"

Birth 2014
gourds
22 x 23 x 24"





Screech 2014
gourds
17 x 21 x 19"



Flush 2014
gourds
16 x 25 x 17"



Charactor 2013
gourds
16 x 18 x 19"



Silver Standard 2013
gourds
15 x 17 x 15"



Reach 1995
gourds
11 x 32 x 16"





Tarbaby 2005
gourds
32 x 11 x 10"

Tower 2003
trumpet vine seeds
23 x 18 x 20"





Knot 2010
gourds
46 x 20 x 10"



Dwelling 1993
birch bark
19 x 14 x 16"



Pouch 1995
milkweed pods, wood
32 x 10 x 18"

Tassel 2001
phragmites, rawhide
46 x 22 x 22"





Nest 2011
ivory, grapevine and gourd
5 x 5 x 5"



Dance 2009
gourds
5 x 5 x 5"



Pounce 2009
gourds
6 x 5 x 6"

Chile 2004
copper, bamboo, eucalyptus leaves
32 x 5 x 2"

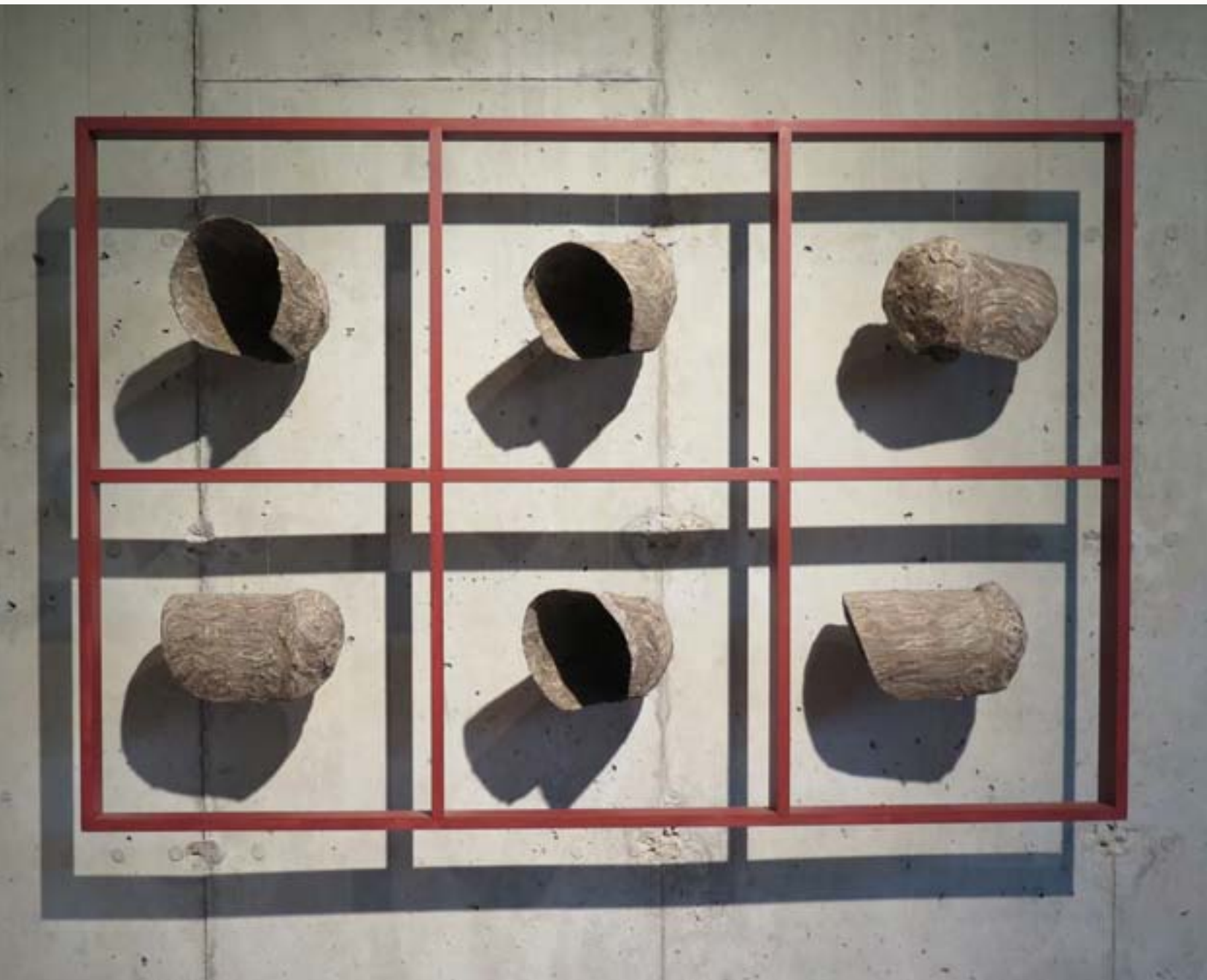




Direction 2006
gourds
11 x 13 x 14"



Rolling 2012
gourds
9 x 9 x 3"



No Peripheral Vision 2002
wasp's nest, wood
35 x 58 x 7"

Exhibitions

Education:	1972	Harvard Extension School: B.A. (cum laude)
	1982	Massachusetts College of Art: B.F.A.
Solo Exhibitions:	2002	"Refuge", Boston Sculptors at Chapel Gallery, West Newton, MA
	2000	"Shelter", Boston Sculptors at Chapel Gallery, West Newton, MA
	1997	"Couples", Boston Sculptors at Chapel Gallery, West Newton, MA
	1995	Boston Sculptors at Chapel Gallery, West Newton, MA
	1993	Boston Sculptors at Chapel Gallery, West Newton, MA
Group Exhibitions:	2011	20th Anniversary of Boston Sculptors, Boston, MA
	2007	Boston Sculptors, Boston, MA
	2006	"Summer Show", Barbara Krakow Gallery, Boston, MA
	2006	"Elemental Explorations", Nesto Gallery, Milton, MA
	2005	"Wood", Nielson Gallery, Boston, MA
	2004-2014	Annual Aids Benefit Show, Barbara Krakow Gallery, Boston, MA
	2003	"Collection Connection", Art Complex Museum, Duxbury, MA
	2001	"Anything but Paper Prayers", Barbara Krakow Gallery, Boston, MA
		"Self Portraits", Boston Sculptors at Chapel Gallery, West Newton, MA
	2000	"The Ceramic Project", Barbara Krakow Gallery, Boston, MA
		"National Members Exhibition", A.I.R. Gallery, New York City, NY
	1998	"Material Connect", Boston-Paris Sculpture/Fiber, Federal Reserve Bank
		"Landscape IV", Nielsen Gallery, Boston, MA
		"Bronze18", Boston Sculptors at Chapel Gallery, West Newton, MA
		"A Gathering: Summer 1998", Barbara Krakow Gallery, Boston, MA
		"Landscape III", Nielson Gallery, Boston, MA
		Biennale Internationale de Tapisseries Contemporaines et de Sculptures, Paris, France
	1996	"Landscape", Nielson Gallery, Boston, MA
		"Bronze18", Boston Sculptors at Chapel Gallery, West Newton, MA
	1995	BioLab, Inc., Beverly, MA
	1994	"A Garden", Barbara Krakow Gallery, Boston, MA
	1993	Boston Sculptors, Attleboro Museum, Attleboro, MA
	1992	"L.W.H.", Three Dimensional Art Work by Massachusetts College of Art Alumni/ae, Boston, MA
		Sculpture Walk, Milton, MA
		Boston Sculptors at Chapel Gallery, West Newton, MA
	1991	"The Fabric of Life, Contemporary American Works in Fiber"
		Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston, MA
		Sculpture Walk, Walnut Place, MA
	1990	Contemporary Sculpture at Chesterwood, Stockbridge, MA
		6th Triennial Exhibition, Fuller Museum of Art, Brockton, MA
	1989	Contemporary Sculpture at Chesterwood, Stockbridge, MA
		Boston Athenaeum Member's Exhibition, Boston, MA
		"Allusion-Dimension", Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA

Credits

Most of the images of sculpture were taken by Will Howcroft
So You Know portrait by Bill Thompson
Family portrait by Elizabeth de Roeth
Catalog design by Nick Angelo

For further information about Terry Albright's sculpture
contact Barbara Krakow Gallery, Boston, MA



Portrait by Mary Sloane

TERRY ALBRIGHT



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