

Carol Beth Icard



'Alchemy' mixed media on cradled panel 30 x 40 inches

"Alchemy" will be part of the

Art Trek preview show

at the [Upstairs Artspace](#) in Tryon, NC.

May 5 - 19, 2012

Preview Party: May 4 5 - 8pm

Art Trek Studio Tour

May 5, 10 - 5pm & May 6, 12 - 5pm

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foothills open studios
MAY 5-6, 2012

Artists open their studios in Tryon,
Saluda, Columbus & Landrum

PREVIEW PARTY & EXHIBIT

Upstairs Artspace

Preview Party: May 4, 5-8 pm | Exhibit: May 5-19

Gallery Hours: Tuesday-Saturday Noon-6 pm; Sun Noon-4 pm

ART TREK TRYON TOUR

Trek Base: Upstairs Artspace Opens at 10 am

Saturday, May 5, 10 am-5 pm;

Sunday, May 6, Noon-5 pm

upstairs [artspace]

49 S. Trade St., Tryon, NC 28782 828.859.2828 upstairsartspace.org

Turchin Center for the Visual Arts

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rising skyward, its serpentine tail weaving out from the center.

A closer look at Holsenbeck's *STUFF: Where does it come from and where does it go?* reveals truths both fanciful and profound.

"I've been documenting the "stuff" of American life for over 20 years – the things we use once and throw away," says Holsenbeck, an environmental artist whose large-scale installations raises awareness of environmental issues and inspires sustainable living.

"We Americans create more garbage per capita than any other culture, yet we're blind to it," she said. "My job as an artist is to transform materials I find in the environment into something beautiful, so when people see it they begin to think about these issues."



Work by Bryant Holsenbeck

Thus, plastic and glass bottles strung with bamboo chopsticks form the trunks and branches of a forest; countless metal and plastic caps and lids become the tail of the mandala, itself made of multi-colored jars, bottles and cartons.

In conjunction with the exhibition, Holsenbeck took part in a residency at

Appalachian in February that included classroom visits, lectures and workshops. Students and community volunteers helped to collect materials and construct creations for the installation. During the week prior to opening this exhibition 200 volunteers pitched in with Holsenbeck and Turchin Center staff to prepare for use 30,000 plastic bottles collected from around campus.

"They say a picture is worth a thousand words... We created a picture in the gallery windows with 10,000 plastic and glass bottles – that's the number of bottled drinks sold on campus in one week," said Ben Wesemann, project coordinator and acting director of the Catherine Smith Gallery. He describes Holsenbeck as a master at making this type of community project successful, and at using society's waste to create provocative works of art.

"In viewing Bryant's work people are being educated about what it represents," Wesemann said. "It's a more tangible and powerful message than reading statistics on a website."

Jennifer Maxwell, a resource conservation specialist with Appalachian's Office of Sustainability says the connection Holsenbeck's work makes between art and environmental awareness is an excellent fit for the university.

"At Appalachian, we're committed to being a zero-waste campus, so Bryant's message is very relevant here," Maxwell said. "It calls attention to our consumption habits while highlighting the importance of reducing that impact through the choices we make every day," she said.

For Holsenbeck, the act of collecting thousands of plastic bottles on campus for her installation represents an issue that has added a deeper dimension to her work and her life: single-use plastics.

"Grocery bags, soda lids, straws, water and soda bottles, food containers

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Work by Bryant Holsenbeck

and packaging – all are single-use plastic – made to use once and designed to last forever," said Holsenbeck.

And "last forever" they appear to do. Worldwide pollution stats indicate that since the 1950s one billion tons of plastic have been discarded, and can be expected to persist in the environment for thousands of years.

The Great Pacific Garbage Patch, an enormous litter zone in the North Pacific, is reported to span an area twice the size of the continental United States. Composed primarily of plastics, the chemical breakdown is killing sea life and birds in the region.

Discouraged by such environmental truths and determined to change her own consumption habits, Holsenbeck challenged herself to live without single-use plastics. That was two years ago, and she hasn't wavered. She documents her experience in a blog: "THE LAST STRAW: A

continued quest for life without disposable plastic."

In an entry from February 2010, she writes, "What I only slightly understood when I began this journey was how saturated we are with plastics. Paying attention to what is in front of me is what I try to do when I get near any sort of commerce. The minute I forget, voilà! I get plastic I didn't bargain for."

For Holsenbeck, life without single-use plastics is worth the effort, "Especially once you understand that what we all do – the decisions we make – really matter," she said. "This installation at the Turchin Center has been my biggest opportunity yet to share that message."

So, the next time you see a plastic bag caught in a tree or a gutter full of plastic bottles, straws and lids, think about Holsenbeck and ask yourself, "Where is this stuff going?"

The Turchin Center for the Visual Arts presents exhibition, education and collection programs that support Appalachian State University's role as a key regional educational, cultural and economic resource.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Center at 828/262-3017 or visit (www.tcva.org).

The deadline each month to submit articles, photos and ads is the 24th of the month prior to the next issue. This will be
May 24th for the June 2012 issue and
June 24 for the July 2012 issue.
Don't put it off. Get your info to us - soon.



The Artist's Coop
on the square

An Artist's Cooperative

113 East Laurens Street
Laurens, SC • 864-984-9359
10-5:30pm Tues. - Fri., 10-3pm Sat.
www.laurensartistscoop.org
Laurensartistscoop@backroads.net

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