

rises in a city park like Pinocchio's nose, a metaphor for the growing violence in our urban places. The fossilized handguns, reclaimed from a Pittsburgh buy-back program, appear as rich mineral ore in the structure, which emulates the predominant vertical lines of the downcity skyline, most notably in the old Hospital Trust and Fleet buildings.

Perhaps the most ambitious of this year's *Convergence* works use the familiar landmark of the Providence Hurricane Barrier. *Steel & Light*, conceived and executed primarily by architects from Roger Williams University, transformed the steel shells and pylons of the barrier into a "glowing gateway to Narragansett Bay" for two nights, using brilliantly colored light, changing images, and sound. In so doing, the artists fused a dizzying number of elements resonant to the Rhode Island experience.

Steel & Light pays homage to the special relationship Rhode Islanders have with the bay as well as the state's industrial heritage. The barrier neighborhood has also evolved into a trendy nightspot area (a scene in *There's Something About Mary* was filmed here) and thus is a natural location for the next wave of elemental public art in Providence. The project marries city and nature, combining primal symbolism with a nighttime setting and the latest technology in the manner of the hugely popular Providence Water-Fire celebrations.

Scattered throughout Gardner Jackson Park and again along the Providence Riverwalk is a series of podiums made from cedar and steel. The work, collectively known as *Narrative Forest* and created by Robert Barnstone of Pullman, Washington, grows loosely in the space like a grove of trees. A different poem is inscribed on each steel surface. As we move from "tree to tree," reading each poem, the park and the riverwalk turn into exactly the kinds of destinations they were intended to be—not merely go-betweens on our daily commutes, but places of leisure, relaxation, and calming, amid the rush of city chaos.

Many of the public sculptures represented—like *Modus*, the hulking steel abstract of Beltsville, Maryland, artist Drew Goerlitz—are experiments in negative shape, mass, and balance. These pieces are mostly concerned with synthesis of line and solving complex difficulties with simple forms. Yet they often invite the viewer through the space as well as around it, creating new doorways, tunnels and passages in a city already rich in them. In Rock Hill, South Carolina, artist

Jon Rajkovich's *Canal*, located at Biltmore Park, a plywood and light tunnel welcomes you inside. Although best seen at night when the tunnel is full of light, even daytime views reward the visitor with Providence city scenes, like the commuter running to catch the departing bus to Pawtucket, or the man on the park bench feeding the pigeons.

—Doug Norris

David Winton Bell Gallery at Brown University/ Providence

COMMITMENT TO THE STRUGGLE: THE ART OF SUE COE

Journalism, satire, and art collide in the confrontational retrospective of political artist Sue Coe. This exhibition features drawings and prints depicting the dark side of corporate, government, scientific, and social practices in America and the world over the last thirty years.

Seemingly nothing is spared in Coe's microscope, from obvious targets like the Ku Klux Klan, apartheid, and skinheads to corporate abuses of the Panama Canal and the Exxon Valdez spill. Other drawings focus on the treatment of animals in science and the American meat industry, the tension between labor and industry, Malcolm X, and AIDS.

There is nothing subtle in her distinctive style, which combines narrative techniques with nightmarish imagery in works that allude to yet also transcend the editorial cartoon.

Most of the images are rendered in graphic black-and-white, appearing on the wall like stills from a film noir. When color is added—as in some of Coe's animal experimentation drawings—the dominant hue is blood red.

Coe's work is critical and often sarcastic. In simple but powerful etchings, she plays with words: *MOBILize the GULF between mind-boggling corporate greed and human survival* shows former President Bush bombing Iraq in a stark cartoon that seems remarkably prescient given the events of today. For work that is so politically aggressive and more than a decade old, the images do not feel dated but rather loom ominously as lessons we never learn.

Whether the subject is war, greed, poverty, the ethical treatment of animals, or any range of social conditions, it's impossible to miss her point that our way of life depends in part on turning a blind eye to suffering and misery. Taken collectively, the exhibition reads like a politically charged marriage between Charles

Adams's *New Yorker* drawings and Gary Larson's *Far Side* cartoons. Coe's grotesques force us to look at that which we know is true, but try not to think about in our daily lives.

—Doug Norris

Vermont

Windham Art Gallery/Brattleboro

INSPIRATION SHARED

Inspiration Shared featured gallery members who invited nonmembers to share an exhibition. WAG member Melissa Scheid Frantz shared gallery space with Donnel Barnum, and both artists chose a photograph taken in China for inspiration. Scheid Frantz's rendition titled *Gullin Home* captures the essence of the scene in her usual Technicolor palette. They are at once brilliant as jewels and joyful in their unreality. Her *Great Wall of China* is stunning in her use of striking amethyst shadows draping like flags around a winding fortress of pewter and gray.

Barnum, on the other hand, paints realistically using the colors of the earth and vegetation. Working with the inherent quality of oil paint's grease, Barnum is able to capture the thick, roiling-brown waters of the Chinese snapshot. Barnum's paintings, *Morgan Farm* and *Equinox Barn*, deftly capture autumn breathing fire and gold over a New England landscape.

Painter Judy Hawkins and her son, photographer Nicholas Hodson, worked well together. Hawkins moved from her familiar tropical bird colors to a cooler realm. Blues and pale golds softly glow in *Calm and Light on Distant Dunes*, which explores quietly brilliant moments captured along the warm shoulders of coastal beaches.

Hodson displays geological uses of color in his large-scale photographs. From volcanic sunsets over primordial seas to frozen, ice-blue waters lapping against lava-textured rocks, he encapsulates the emotions found in a wide spectrum of waterscapes.

Hodson's *Aquinnah Light* takes a painterly approach; the surfaces of his photographs have a pastel-like texture. Like the flames of a campfire, the color of the sky reflected over blood-red waters jumps from the composition. In contrast, *Lucy Vincent Rock* is strikingly cold and sensuous—like a glacial siren of ice water frozen against the "body" of an ancient, stone-bound coast.

—Diana Lischer-Goodband