

## The Voices Emerging From College Studios

By SUSAN HODARA

**L**AST November, the Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art assembled a team of 18 gallery owners, curators, collectors and artists for the purpose of making studio visits — not to already-established artists, but to art students in master of fine arts programs across the United States. The results of their travels to nearly 2,000 studios at more than 30 colleges and universities — and of a subsequent selection process that winnowed candidates they would spotlight to 12 — can be seen in “First Look III,” now on view at the museum.

“The idea is to take the pulse of what’s going on in the art schools and to see if there’s a special voice *“First Look III” runs through July 24 in the mezzanine gallery at the Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art, 1701 Main Street, Peekskill. Open Saturday and Sunday, noon to 6 p.m., and by appointment. For more information: hvcca.org or (914) 788-0100.*

coming out of the student population,” said Livia Straus, the center’s president and director.

The voices emerging from the 20 works in “First Look III” use a variety of media and styles, from sharply realistic oil portraits of tattooed men by Steven Chapman to elaborate wearable sculpture by Irvin Morozan to Gabriel Dawe’s diaphanous floor-to-ceiling installation made with a rainbow of Gütermann sewing thread.

Among the more conceptual works are Shadi Harouni’s installation, “Things,” in which three watermelons and a pair of sneakers are placed inside holes built into the wall, and the site-specific “untitled,” a delicate arrangement of nearly invisible pencil lines, thread and clear plastic sheets by Jong Oh.

As the name implies, this is the third such survey organized by the center. Ms. Straus noted that painting was particularly strong in the 2005 show, while sculpture was preva-



SHADI HAROUNI

**BUDDING** “Things,” an installation by Shadi Harouni, in “First Look III.”

lent in 2007. In compiling the current show, she said, “we saw more conceptual and installation work. I see it as a trend toward experimentation, toward really pushing the boundaries.”

This year’s artists are a diverse group, ranging in age from their 20s to their 40s, with seven born overseas, in Iran, Botswana, Mauritania and other nations.

With the exception of the University of Texas, Dallas, the schools they attend are on either coast; more than half of the artists are from programs in Manhattan.

“In the end it came down to the quality of the work,” said Jessica Denaro, the museum’s deputy director for institutional growth and a member of the show’s curatorial team as well as its selection committee.

But when the artist is still a student, talent and quality imply potential. “This exhibition isn’t meant to be presenting the evolved artist,” Ms. Denaro said. “These are the buds. Let’s see what happens.”

Published on line: July 1, 2011

In print on July 3, 2011, page WE10 of the New York edition with the headline: The Voices Emerging From College Studios. | Westchester Arts Listings