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Natural Impulses

Nancy Graves, Hilary Berseth,
Maria Nepomuceno, Alyson Shotz

April 17–May 23, 2015

Reception:
Friday May 1, 5:30–7:30 pm

Gallery hours:
Tue–Sat: 10 am–6 pm



Installation view of Alyson Shotz's rubberized *Untitled* (2003) and Maria Nepomuceno's beaded *Untitled* (2014).

Locks Gallery is pleased to present *Natural Impulses*, a group exhibition highlighting four artistic perspectives that examine scientific wonders and further discovery in processes of the natural world through studio practices. A reception will be held on Friday, May 1, 2015 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. New works by Hilary Berseth and Maria Nepomuceno will be on view alongside early works by Alyson Shotz and late-career works of the late artist Nancy Graves.

The artist **Nancy Graves** (1939–1995) in many ways forged the model for the contemporary artists to cross the boundaries of art and science—referencing fossils, lunar maps, and oceanographic charts in her early work. Her bronzes casts in the 1980s turned her focus towards the possibilities of material science and organic forms, beckoning a new era where bronze was revived as a relevant contemporary artistic medium. In many of these sculptures, Graves direct cast parts of common and exotic plants, sculpturally realizing her previous fascination with the intricacies of form in scientific illustration.

Artists who have since furthered the discussion between art and science include Bucks County sculptor and Columbia University alumnus **Hilary Berseth**, who engages with chemistry, electricity, and apiculture to make forms that elegantly embody the scientific wonder of these unique processes. One of Berseth's acclaimed beehives will be on view;

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art that is executed by hundreds of honeybees that colonize and build upon Berseth's sculptural templates. For the execution of these works, Berseth became connected with Jim Bobb, a renowned local beekeeper who has managed more than 100 hives including Longwood Gardens, the Morris Arboretum at the University of Pennsylvania, and the Barnes Foundation. Additionally, two works made in metal will be exhibited, each is "grown" through an electroplating process in a liquid bath of soluble metal. The resulting works are reminiscent of intricate coral formations or grand geologic valleys seen from far above.

Brazilian artist **Maria Nepomuceno** works with materials like beads, ropes, braided straw, carnauba leaves, and earthenware to embody binary natural forces in playful installations. A 2014 untitled sculptural installation will be exhibited—a work from the same series in cobalt blue beads was recently acquired by the Guggenheim Museum for their permanent collection. Drawing on the craft traditions of her home country, Nepomuceno makes forms that suggest a range of forms from the imaginary to the bodily and biologic. Most importantly, the artist makes works that foster a sense of invitation both in their creation and in their exhibition. Over the years, she has collaborated on techniques with the indigenous people in the Huni Kuin tribe in northwest Brazil and continues to make large-scale installations where visitors interact directly with her work including immersive cocoon/hammock forms.

New York based artist and RISD alumnus **Alyson Shotz** responds to scientific phenomena with her distinctly human-altered leafy sculptures, biomorphic and crystalline two-dimensional works, and physics-inspired installations. Creating works in a wide variety of two and three-dimensional media, her work has attempted to give form to many of the non-visible forces of nature, ranging from the properties of light to the increasing ubiquity of genetically modified organisms. Often starting works while considering scientific methods or mathematical principles, Shotz arrives at elegant forms that expand our understanding of sculptural space.

Locks Gallery is located at 600 Washington Square South in Philadelphia, PA. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 am to 6 pm. For additional information, please contact Locks Gallery at 215.629.1000, 215.629.3868 fax, or khjohnson@locksgallery.com.

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