

"It makes a huge difference when you wake in the morning and come out of your house... emerging out into a landscape that is just as much, if not more, alive as you. What amazes me about landscape, landscape recalls you into a mindful mode of stillness, solitude, and silence where you can truly receive time."

These words of Irish poet, the late John O'Donohue, speak so well to the experience of life in the Resident Barns, those magic boxes at the end of Bill Brown Way.

"To truly receive time" - there is a fullness and a generosity in that phrase that corresponds to the one so often used to describe the Penland residency — a gift of time. Time singularly dedicated to finding out what one's creative life is made of, and how to sustain that life for all of one's days. Perhaps a daunting time, as it takes courage and determination to stay in that "mindful mode of stillness." But staying there allows one into that mysterious region in oneself, the unknown in oneself, from which one's best work emerges.

The current residents at the Barns are each deeply engaged with their hands, masterful in their craft. But what distinguishes them for me, as a group is the way in which their crafting of the visible world brings a compassionate attention to bear on the invisible world. It's as though each of them is working with an awareness of that other kind of time, the passage of which ineluctably threads past to future, binding us to each other, carrying our collective human experience along through memory and record and inherited knowledge.

By using acquired materials, Jaydan Moore in his silverwork and Andrew Hayes in his steel and book sculptures, allow the voices of past functions and histories to speak in beautiful new forms. Seth Gould's tools and sculptures celebrate and reinvigorate the ingenuity of skilled artisans lost to history but for what they themselves revealed in their making. Mercedes Jelinek, with her poignant Photo Booth portraits, records the passing moment, archiving in chunky black notebooks all the fellow beings with whom she shares the places she calls home, once the streets of Brooklyn and now the community at Penland. With the contradictory properties of cast glass - weight and translucency - Dean Allison immortalizes those who are dear to him, their eyes closed, as though already slipping into the past.

Tom Jaszczak's work gives us exactly the comfort and aesthetic pleasure that we want in the domestic objects with which we surround ourselves while Maggie Finlayson undermines that comfort entirely by suggesting that those inanimate objects are just as beautifully subject to dissolution & decay, just as mortal, as we ourselves are. The confounding surfaces of Annie Evelyn's New Colony Furniture — the name harboring her family's heritage — wittily reminds us of our vulnerability in a world not as stable as it appears.

Each of these artists takes something that is profoundly familiar to us in our physical world - cup, book, visage, chair, tool – and, through their enormous gifts as makers, transforms it into something that makes us look upon our world with awe and wonder. From these artists, we receive our own gift of time - enter into our own stillness in which to contemplate what it means to be part of this noble human adventure.

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