

ALAN BINSTOCK • SCULPTOR
4218 31ST STREET, MT. RAINIER, MD 20712

STATEMENT

My sculptor's career is balanced with a concurrent career as architect and master planner NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. I have a continued exposure to near and deep space images as well as a bit of quantum physics which are all powerful influences on my work. This proposal will create a sense of place on the median and be compatible with the development context. My fascination with plate glass and shattered tempered glass is sparked by observations of apparent forms and inner/subtle forms that are revealed by the telescope and microscope. My work often uses glass and steel in a creative dialogue borrowing from my experience as an architect, and makes an easeful connection with the building complex and agrarian context. As a lay person, I can both celebrate the frontiers of science and take poetic license with scientific theory in the creation of sculptural experience.

Glass is shattered, broken, "cold fused" with resins, layered, sometimes chiseled, ground and polished like stone, creating opportunity to magnify and change inner forms. Its transparency allows a second reading beneath or beyond the surface, while the forms approach a simple, minimal grain of an ideal. Light is captured. Radiance becomes a part of my palette, through a matrix of re-purposed tempered glass, resins and dyes, I engage the changing qualities of daylight to inform and enrich these sculptures.

Long-time influences include Newton and Einstein as well as the work of Isamu Noguchi, Martin Puryear, Andy Goldsworthy, and David Smith.

My last show was at the American University Museum at the Katzen Center. I investigate forms that express the nature of the seeker's inner passage while capturing the wonder of the explorer's outward search to find meaning in the universe, overlaid with a fascination with process and materials.

BIO

I was born and raised in the Bronx. My formal fine arts education began in New York's High School of Music and Art, followed by undergraduate studies in Fine at Hunter College. After teaching Fine Arts in a South Bronx Junior High School, and a year of travel, I settled in Boulder, Colorado, developing sculpture and jewelry of wood, stone, silver and deer antler. Work at the time was greatly influenced by the amorphous forms of Jans Arp and Henry Moore. While working at Quest Foundry, I was exposed to all phases of wax modeling, bronze casting and finishing. At this time I became a student of Yoga, and later a teacher and Director of the Boulder Integral Yoga Institute. This pursuit was continued at the Satchidananda Ashram in Connecticut. I worked as a carpenter, building homes, and later as a cabinetmaker for a sailboat manufacturer, learning about finely crafted details.

A four-year graduate program at the University of Maryland School of Architecture gave me a new perspective in three-dimensional design. Before Master Planning at NASA, I have worked for many years as a Registered Architect and Project Manager in several area firms. This ongoing education in construction methods and materials, and my exposure to quantum physics and Eastern metaphysics are a continuous source of rich subject matter over these past fifteen years of exhibiting sculpture. I want my work to catalyze a sense of excited inquiry and quietude, and hopefully, a moment of self-reflection.

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PUBLIC COMMISSIONS

Pilgrim's Quandary – Post Park Apartment Complex, Hyattsville 2009

Raintree – A Celebration of Green Architecture, Affordable Housing for Artists

Mt. Rainier, MD – Commissioned by Prince George's County

Leaves - Affordable Housing for Artists

Mt. Rainier, MD – Commissioned by Housing Initiative Program

SOLO & GROUP SHOWS

American University Museum at the Katzen Center, DC 2010

MNCPPC Inaugural Show, Brentwood, MD 2010

The American Center for Physics, (solo show) College Park, MD 2008-2009

H&F Fine Arts (solo show) Mount Rainier, MD 2008

Chi Contemporary Art Gallery (solo show) New York City 2007

Katzen Museum, Washington, DC 2007

Wit Gallery, Lenox Mass, 2007

Gallery 10, Washington, DC 2007

1111 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, DC 2007

Washington Square, Washington, DC 2007

Zenith Gallery (solo show), Washington, DC 2006

Flashpoint Gallery, Washington, DC 2006

A Celebration Of Glass, Steel And Stone (solo retrospective)

University of Maryland University College, College Park, Maryland 2005

Frazer Gallery, Bethesda, Maryland 2004

State House, Annapolis, Maryland 2004

Capitol Hill Group Show, Washington, DC 2004

Merweather Post Pavilion, Columbia, MD 2004

Elizabeth Roberts Gallery (solo show) Washington, DC 2004

92nd Street Pier - Art Fair, New York City 2003

QI Art Gallery (solo show) Brooklyn, NY 2003

Montpelier Cultural Arts Center, Laurel, MD 2003

Soho Arts South (solo show), Palm Beach, '02

1111 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, DC 2002

Ocharo Gallery, Washington. DC 2002

Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts 2001

QI Art Space (solo show) Brooklyn, NY 2001

National Symphony Orchestra Show Home, Washington, DC 2001

Washington Square, Washington, D.C. 2000, 2001

Grounds for Sculpture, Hamilton, NJ 2000

Cast Iron Gallery, New York City, NY 2000

Gallery Okuda (solo show) Washington, DC 1999

Seventh Street Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC 1999

Elaine Benson Gallery, Bridgehampton, NY 1998, 1999

Amagansett Gallery, Amagansett, NY 1999

Finer Side Gallery, Salisbury, MD 1998, 1999

Sculpture Court, Southampton, NY 1998

Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC 1998

Gallery 505, Washington, DC 1998

MNCPPC – Arts & Cultural Heritage – Headquarters, Bladensburg, MD 1998

Gallery 10 (solo show) Washington, DC 1998

Washington Design Center, Washington, DC 1998
Brookside Gardens, Wheaton, MD 1998
Capitol Arts, Annual Outdoor Sculpture Show, Washington, DC 1998
University of Maryland Conference Center (solo show) College Park, MD 1997
1010 Wayne Avenue (solo show) Silver Spring, MD 1997
U.S. Air Arena (MNCPPC Gallery), Landover, MD 1997
Art at the Federal Courthouse, Greenbelt, MD 1996
1996 Tricentennial Art Show @ Riversdale Mansion, Riverdale, MD 1996

GALLERY REPRESENTATION

Causey Contemporary
92 Wythe Avenue, Brooklyn, NY
718-218-839

REVIEWS

Sculpture Magazine – Nancy Ungar
Sculpture Magazine – Laura Roulet
The Washington Post – Ferdinand Protzman
The Washington Post – Michael O Sullivan
The Washington Post – Nicole Lewis
Greenbelt News – Dennis Jelalian
The Gazette – Jeffrey Lyles
(NASA) Goddard News – Eraina McCoy

EDUCATION & LICENSE

University of Maryland School of Architecture
Master of Architecture – 1985
Hunter College, New York City
High School of Music and Art, New York City
BA – Fine Arts/Sculpture/ – 1969
Fine Arts/Sculpture – 1964

sculpture

July/August 2015
Vol. 30 No. 5
A publication of the
International Sculpture Center

WASHINGTON, DC

Alan Binstock

Katzen Arts Center, American
University

Alan Binstock's contemplative Zen garden of large-scale glass and steel sculptures in the courtyard of the Katzen Center translated abstract astrophysical and spiritual concepts into colorful visual form. Like much of Binstock's sculpture, this new series draws on his training as yoga, architect, and facility planner for NASA and embodies a fascination with macro and micro visualizations of the universe. More specifically,

these works were inspired by Charles and Ray Eames's 1958 film *Powers of Ten*, which has achieved cult status with the mathematics/scientific set. Illustrating the scale of the universe by factors of 10, the film begins with a one-square-meter, overhead view of a couple lying on a picnic blanket. The camera then zooms out to

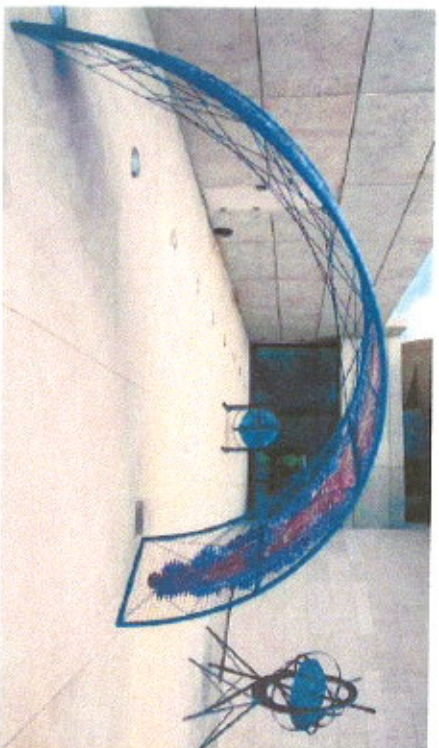
encompass the entire observable universe and then reverses course, zooming into microscopic scale, down to atom, proton, and finally quark. Binstock's sweeping arcs, such as *Terra-M* and *Mercator*, evoke this vision of the vastness of space, while the small-scale *Siblings* and *Parent and Child*, composed of globes of seeping pigment suspended between sheets of glass plate, bring the focus down to the cellular level. *Mercator* refers to a 1569 cylindrical map projection, one of the earliest conceptualizations of the Earth from space. Other works, such as *Wayfinder* and *Birth/Beginning*, allude to astral imagery as seen by spaceship or satellite.

Binstock's celestial blues, aquatic greens, yellows, and reds also seem to be drawn from familiar map schemes. Though the rainbow colors

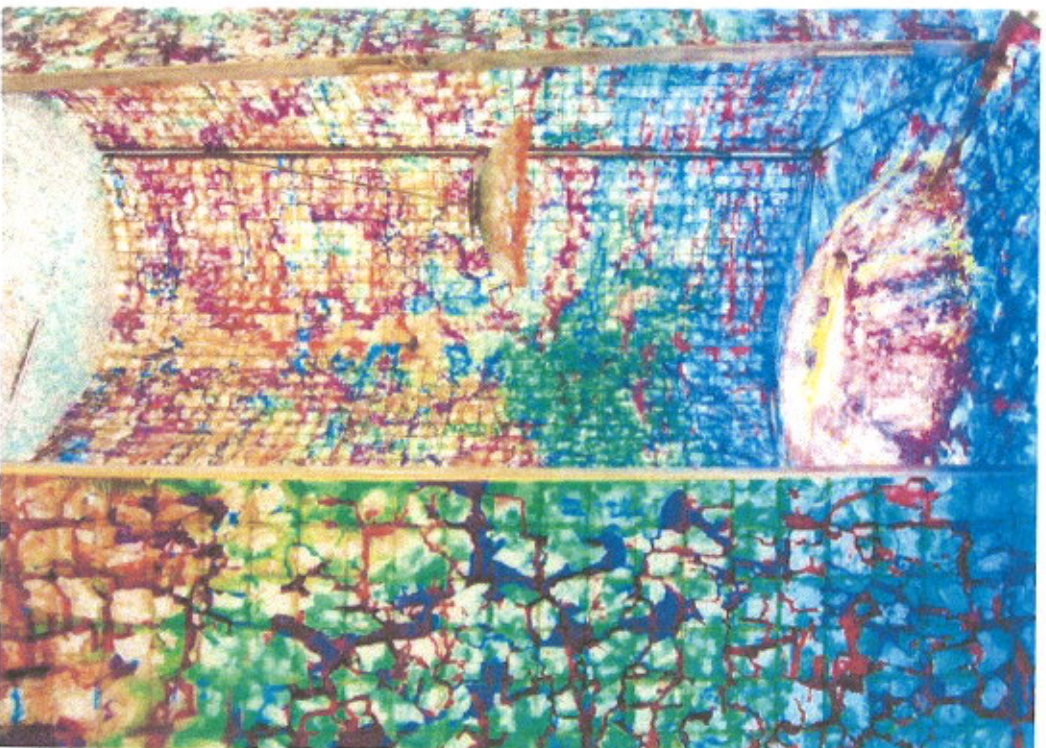
give a groovy 1960s vibe to the work, a darker reading is also possible, considering how the red-tinted pigment on crushed glass can also evoke blood on ice crystals or the gruesome aftermath of a car collision. Resin forms the binder for the sheathed glass fragments, which are suspended on steel supports that provide formal tension and textural contrast. These constructions also serve as metaphors for organic, molecular parades braced by an overlying framework, open to scientific or religious interpretations.

Binstock is interested in spiritual quests as well as astral ones. *Chapel*, an enclosed structure with crushed glass walls and an oculus-reflecting ceiling, offers sanctuary to those who enter. Evoking a Sainte-Chapelle sense of awe with its changing patterns of light and jeweled color, the structure includes an offering bowl of crumbled glass pieces for visitors to take away as part of the experience. A group of portal sculptures of varying sizes could be seen as entries to outer space or inner consciousness, while *Force Ender* and *Tarak* (Sanskrit for "gazing meditation") serve as meditative focal points. *Tarak*, like *Chapel*, is a participatory piece, with three seats welded to a tripod form encircling a suspended gazing ball.

Binstock's sculpture invites imaginary cosmic voyage as well as inner spiritual navigation. By building spaces and focal points for that exploration, he brings us to a recognition of how the vastness of outer space mirrors the inner depths.



Alan Binstock — *Chapel*, 2010. Glass, resin, and stainless steel, detail of interior. Above: Alan Binstock, *Io*, 2010. Glass, resin, and steel, 48 x 48 x 42 in.



Sculpture

December 2004 Vol. 23 No. 10

INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY CENTER WWW.ICCCARTS.COM

Washington, DC

Alan Binstock

Elizabeth Roberts Gallery

Alan Binstock, sculptor, yogi, and NASA architect, uses his art to give shape to the spiritual and intellectual searching that has informed his life. His elegant Minimal forms are honed to a poetic accuracy that illuminates complex statements through form, contrasting materials, and, especially, color. The purity of these forms is such that Binstock's meticulous combinations of steel and glass seem to have been born without his intervention. They are like forms based in silica and metal rather than carbon; their imperfections reflect crystal growth patterns and vulnerability. As in the work of Mark Rothko, Binstock's color seems spiritual, evanescent, and floating.

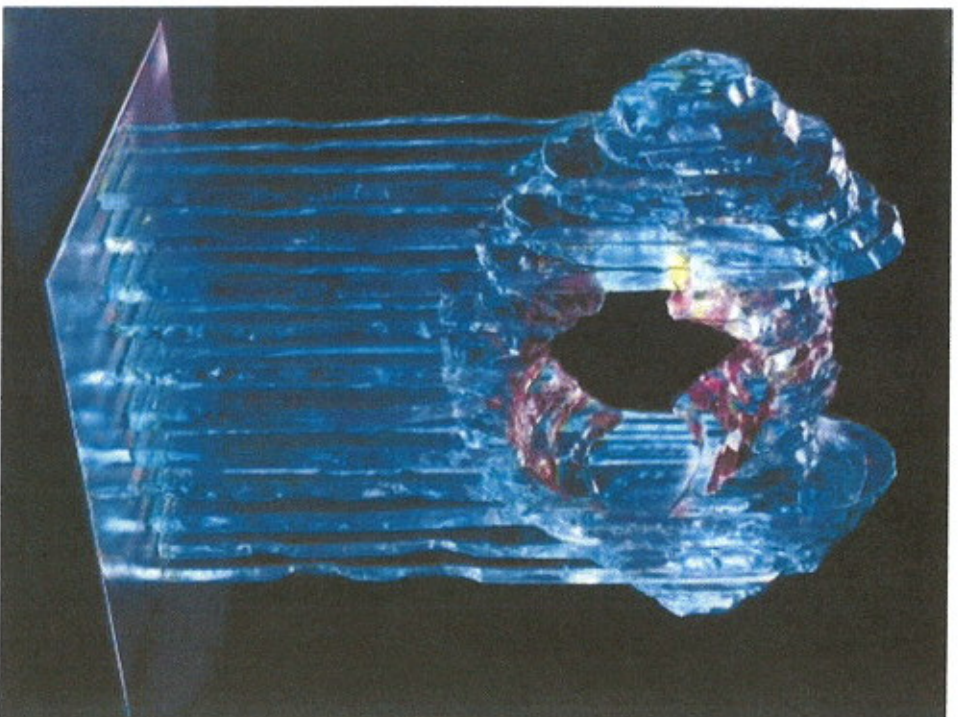
Ascendant Light creates twin towers of sandwashed plate glass. Toward the bottom, they are notched with rich earthy browns. As the slender cubic forms rise, they graduate to blue green and then to heavenly reaches of deep ultramarine. While the whole is placed in a strong steel base, it nevertheless seems impossibly tall and brings to mind the memorial shafts of light that, for a month, lit the

Alan Binstock, A *Touch of Shakti, 2004.* Glass. 16 x 12 x 4 in.

sky above the site of the downed World Trade Center.

In the six-foot-tall *Triumph of the Spirit*, slender twin stems of dark steel soar upward from a convex steel base. Each stem bulges part way up its height with a burgeoning pregnancy that reveals a globule of rough-edged green glass. The steel loops back in again, gathers energy, and finally bursts into a corona of swirling black sepias surrounding multi-colored glass lamina. Stratified and chipped, irregularly stained with oranges and yellows, these crystalline flowers born of dark convex soul, held in the tight corners of their stems, explode in triumph into sunlight.

A *Fourth of Shakti* evokes Binstock's decades-long study of yoga. In the Hindu religion, the powerful Shakti is the goddess of femininity and the cosmic energy of the universe. She is represented as a transparent blue and frolic green glass oval that opens



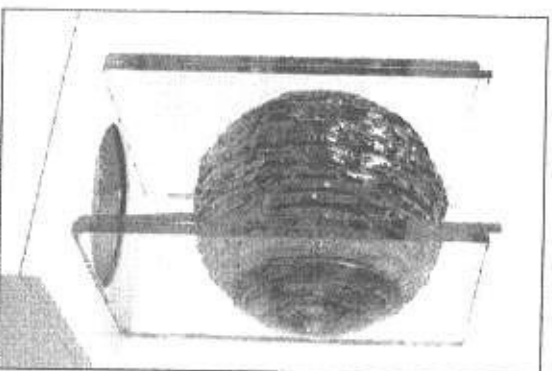
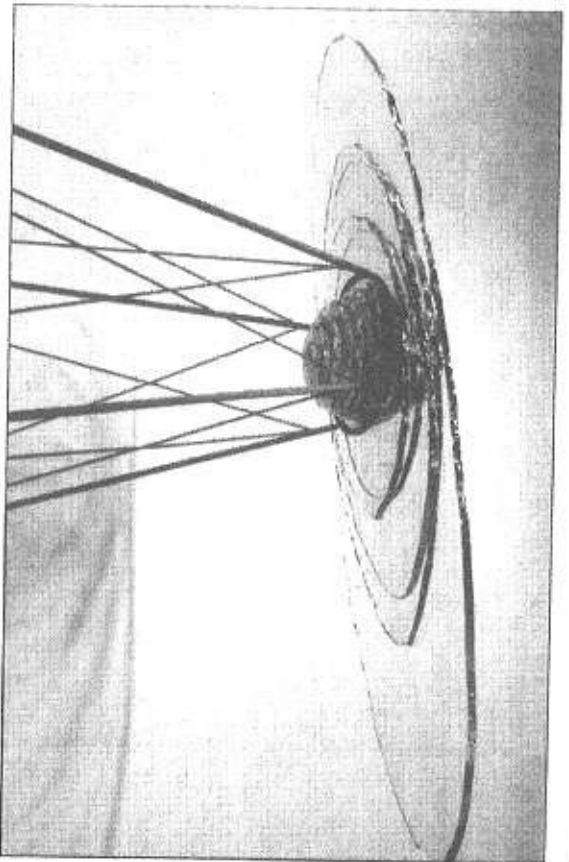
at its center into a roughly chiseled, gaping hole stained with the violets and golds of nebulae. The toroid is held aloft by rhythmically spaced slabs of blue-green glass that seem to imprison it in their stable matrix. Shakti is seductive but not sensual; it looks hard and remote, too cold to touch. Yet it draws you into its rough-cut core like a galaxy with a black hole at its center.

The glass orb in *Birth of a Motion* is solid and supported by somewhat thicker slabs of blue-green glass. The sphere is layered, allowing the eye to peer through

a blue-green outer shell to a cloudy area of yellow and, finally, to its heart, a glowing globe of purplish-red. Binstock, a master of metaphor, has chipped away at the sides of the glass cocoon that holds the notion, the kernel of the idea. It is a protective carapace that has seen hard times.

Binstock has described his work as "a haiku experience in three dimensions." Here, he has used aesthetic economy solely as a bridge to the spiritually extraordinary.

—Nancy Virguri



PHOTOS BY TIBB ALLEN—THE WASHINGTON POST

Alan Binstock's glass sculptures "Cobe's Cosmos," left, and "Orb" at Gallery Okuda, in his first solo show in a commercial gallery.

Galleries

A Sculptor's Full Circle

Alan Binstock's Glass-and-Steel Pieces Run the Gamut

By FERDINAND PROTZMAN
Special to The Washington Post

Gallery Okuda's exhibition of Alan Binstock's abstract sculptures is an uneven affair in which a few truly sublime pieces share space with some well-made but vapid work.

Binstock, an artist, architect and yoga devotee from Mount Rainier, has had some outstandingly original, individual works in group shows around town over the past few years. The same can be said of this exhibition, his first solo show in a commercial gallery.

"Orb," for example, is a ball made from thick, vertically layered slabs of blue-green glass suspended between thick sheets of the same material. Viewed straight on, it looks dense and impenetrable, like some glittering meteorite. But seen from an angle, it provides a remarkable, almost holographic effect that makes a delicate, multicolored ball appear within the larger sphere.

Beautiful as the materials and craftsmanship are, it is its evocative power that makes "Orb" extraordinary. Through a sphere suspended between two rectangles, Binstock calls to mind simple and complex molecular structures, a planet locked in ice, the birth of the cosmos and intimations of the Godhead. Packing all

that into one sculpture is quite an achievement. "Cobe's Cosmos," a glass-and-steel piece, has similar intellectual, spiritual and artistic punch.

Unfortunately, a number of the other sculptures don't. While Binstock's execution is consistently strong, the ideas behind many of his works veer toward the literal and, in a few cases, the puerile. "Mantis" looks like the title insect made of glass and steel. It borders on kitsch. "Liquid Lingum" and "Liquid Lingum II" are glass sculptures shaped like a stylized phallus from which water flows. Possibly meant as a tribute to the Hindu god Shiva, they evoke those "personal fountains" sold in upscale gift shops.

Binstock has provided a tantalizing glimpse of his potential and reason to wonder whether he will fulfill it. He's worth watching.

Nicole Bigar at MOCA

Forget the squabbling over who really painted the late de Koonings or the suggestions that he wasn't all that good. He was, Nicole Bigar, a New York-based artist, was friends with Willem de Kooning, and the late master of abstract expressionism clearly influenced her style. The bright colors, slashing, spontaneous brush strokes and mix of figurative and abstract elements of her recent oil paintings, on display at the Museum of Con-

temporary Art, are a reminder of how vibrant and delightful abstract expressionism can be.

Bigar's style is derivative, but so what? It's derived from one of the best, and she is a fine painter. Her compositions are well organized and lyrical, usually featuring a central figure against a deep background. She favors strong colors and fast, lithe brush strokes. Because of her skill, the canvases have visual resonance. They seem bigger than their actual size, which is generally about 30 by 40 inches.

But where de Kooning's pictures of women could be fraught with licentious abandon, Bigar paints what she refers to as goddesses that "represent strength, femininity, abundance, joy and an affirmation of life."

Although they are abstractions, her figures seem like complete, complex, healthy females, radiating wit, warmth and an elegant, understated sexuality. They stick in your mind, not your face.

Yoichi Tamaki at Alex

Judging from his lively exhibition at Alex Gallery, Yoichi Tamaki would have felt at home in the Washington Color School. The 50-year-old Japanese painter splits his time between Tokyo and Paris, and his oil, acrylic and sand on linen works combine elements of contemporary Western painting with Asian influences.

Style / Arts

Arts Beat

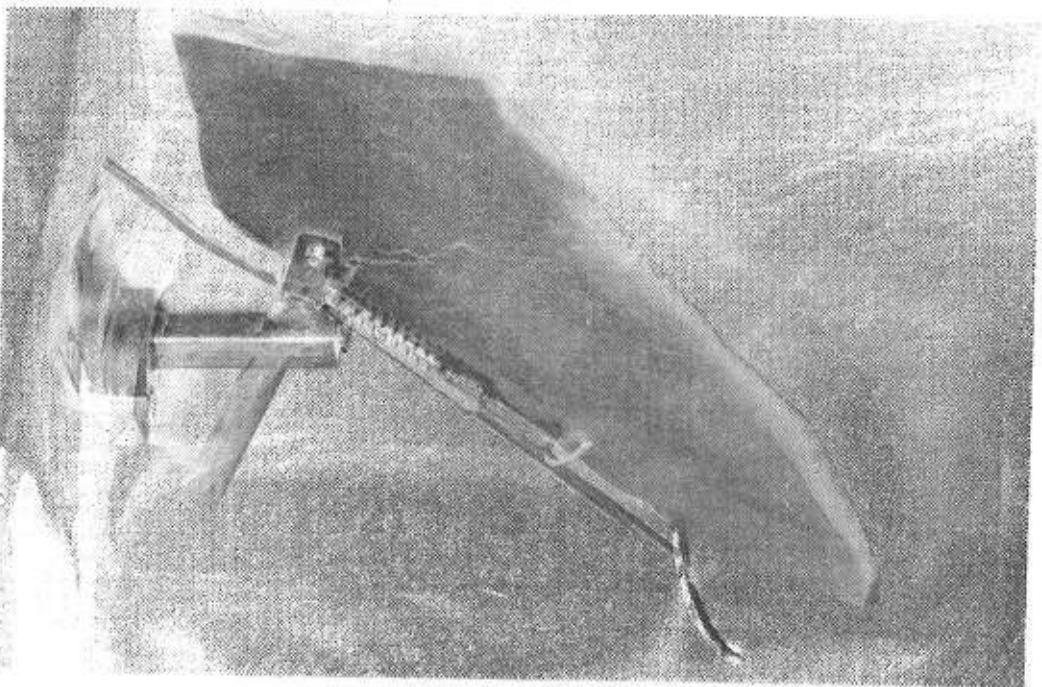
A Verdict For Art at Courthouse

*Sculptor Acquits Himself
Well in Greenbelt Show*

By Michael O'Sullivan
Washington Post Staff Writer

If you venture beyond the U.S. marshals and the metal detectors into the cavernous four-story atrium of the two-year-old federal courthouse in Greenbelt, it is more likely your visit relates to a bankruptcy filing than a search for beauty. But as long as you're there under such stomach-churning circumstances, it helps to have something nice to look at while awaiting your day in court. To that end, the Prince George's Arts Council has assembled an exhibit of works by 21 Maryland artists in those austere halls. Consisting mainly of soothing but unremarkable landscapes and still lifes, the show goes a long way toward relieving the anxiety often associated with an encounter with the justice system. But the work of one artist in particular, Mount Rainier sculptor Alan Binstock, is alone worth the trip.

A compelling hybrid of the primitive and the futuristic, his stone and metal constructions explore what Binstock, a yoga-practicing architect, calls "dynamic tension." Suspended or supported by elaborate steel frames and stands, the fragments of limestone, sandstone, flagstone and steatite hang in cantilevered balance, like arrowheads caught in mid-flight.



Aesthetics in the balance: Mount Rainier sculptor Alan Binstock's limestone and steel work "Chang."

Perhaps it is the presence of the uniformed guards in the lobby, but Binstock's forms possess a martial quality, like silent sentries before the dark, wood-paneled chambers of the law. But that sense of threat is, ironically, the opposite of the artist's intent. "I would describe them as more like the vibrating center of an atom," says Binstock, "a balance of strength and wisdom. Ideally, any time you deliberately create tension in art, you hope there is some resolution."

Through August at the U.S. District Court, 6500 Cherrywood Lane, Greenbelt.

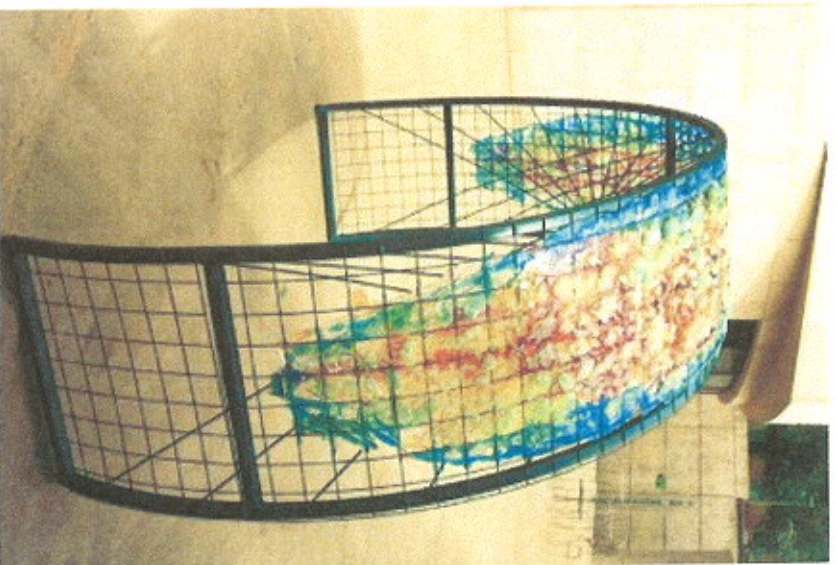
Binstock at the Katzen

Posted by Lenny Campbello

September 28, 2010

Currently on exhibition at [American University's Katzen Museum](#) is [Alan Binstock: Way-Stations](#). The exhibition drives home a couple of important points: (1) The Katzen's presence continues to be a major player not only in the "local" DMV art scene, but its unique design and exhibition space delivers an opportunity for large scale artwork to be exhibited in the perfect setting for size and appreciation, and (2) The DMV is one powerful magnet area for talented artists working with glass as the main substrate.

As one walks around the minimalist and somewhat Teutonic courtyard around the Katzen, the large scale sculptures by Binstock (most of which are glass, resin and steel) resonate with



the space and represent a wonderful opportunity to check out one of the DMV's most gifted sculptors.

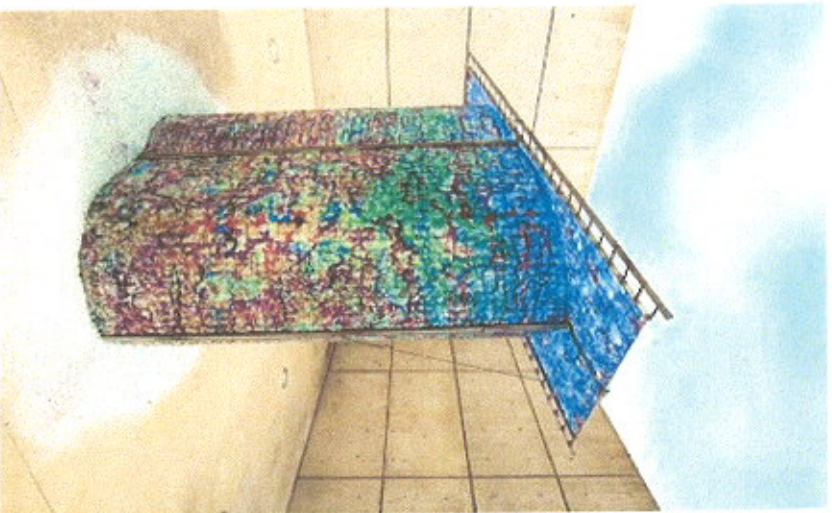
In *Terra*, Binstock accomplishes the successful marriage of these materials in a piece that allows to viewer to admire the work from a distance, as a cosmic visitor might, or from underneath; as if from within the attractive model of the Earth itself.

This positioning of the perspective repeats itself in most of these large scale

Terra by Alan Binstock

works: A two-pronged approach at observing and interacting with the work itself. In *Tradak* (which means "gazing meditation" in Sanskrit), a far view reveals an enticing and slim architecture that suspends a hanging globe of green glass. As the cosmic view is reduced to a closer inspection, the piece offers three open seats within its design, further inviting closer inspection of the globe.

The title of the exhibition (*Way-stations*), refers to [Clifford D. Simak's classic 1960s science fiction novel](#) about virtue and galactic travel. And perhaps the piece which best exemplifies Simak's morality tale is "Chapel."



There is a quiet and universal elegance to the work that manages to place it as both a stopping place on the light-years trek from Earth to perhaps asteroid B612, or the miles long medieval pilgrimages from northern European cities and villages to Santiago.

The exhibition goes through October 24.

Chapel by Alan Binstock

ART LIFE

Your guide to the local art scene

Weekend, April 7 & 8, 2007

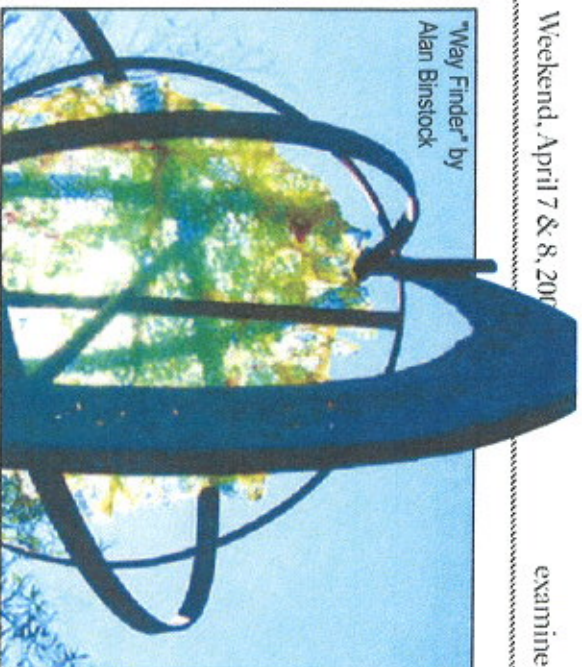
examiner

AROUND TOWN

Saul Steinberg: Illuminations - Propaganda, greeting cards, cartoons, murals, advertising graphics, textile design, set design, book illustration ... Saul Steinberg's talent, imagination and humor knew no bounds. Smithsonian American Art Museum. www.americanart.si.edu

Hand Pulled, Juried Mid-Atlantic Print Show - From classic to cool, local artists' recent works leave lasting impressions. Ellipse Arts Center, 4350 N. Fairfax Drive, Arlington. www.arlingtonarts.org

Specimen - Mixed-media works explore themes of evolution, preservation and decay. Project 4, 903 U St. NW. www.project4gallery.com



"Way Finder" by Alan Binstock

ARTSCAPE

Joining outer space and inner spirit

By Robin Tierney
Special to The Examiner

Like satellites, office workers heading out and art-lovers heading in fell into a new orbit that led to "Wayfinder."

Alan Binstock's commanding glass and metal sculpture expanded its stature and aura as it caught sunlight streaming through

Binstock seeks a precise tension for each work.

1111 Penn's lobby and cast shadows across the floor.

So striking was the effect that a couple asked the Mount Rainier artist about installing the piece on their lawn. He graciously declined the potential sale — not out of any karmic conflict, but due to concern that weather extremes might weaken the structure.

"The glass is cold-fused with epoxy resins — no kiln work involved," explained Binstock. Surrounding the layered glass is a steel ring carved clear through with a design that turns out to be sanskrit characters. They repeat "Hari Om," an ancient mantra for awakening. Binstock drew inspiration from early models of the cosmos called astrolabes. "They were ancient astronomical computing devices."

One of three artists featured in the new exhibition "Elements," Binstock's works reflect the vocations he has mastered over the years: Yoga teacher, carpenter, homebuilder, sailboat cabinemaker, NASA architect. The intricate granite and steel "Sun Yantra" exerts a gravitational pull that makes it hard to look

away. "Before the Apple" directs the eyes on an ascent of granny smith green glass and steel.

Imbuing forms with an inner spirit, Binstock seeks a precise tension for each work; his glass, stone and steel counterbalance and cantilever their way through space.

To transform the lobby into an artwalk, curator Margery Goldberg of Zenith Gallery complemented the Binstock spectrum with works from abstract metal master Paul Martin Wolf and landscape painter Ellen Sinel. Break up those daily rotations: Swing by for some inner peace.

ELEMENTS

On view through June 2

» **Venue:** The Gallery at 1111 Pennsylvania Ave. NW

» **Info:** art@zenithgallery.com; 202-783-2963

» **Hours:** Open weekdays; call in advance for weekend access

Local artist enjoys decade of excellence

by Jeffrey K. Lyles
Staff Writer

photo by Barbara L. Salisbury/Gazette file
photo

Artist Alan Binstock shapes a piece of layered glass at his Mount Rainier studio in 2004. His works are on display in "A Celebration of Glass, Steel & Stone" at the University of Maryland until Oct. 2.

A lot can happen in a decade -- some good and some bad, but for Mount Rainier artist Alan Binstock, reminiscing on his first 10 years is full of happy memories.

Binstock doesn't have far to look because 30 pieces of his art works are part of "A Celebration of Glass, Steel & Stone" exhibit at University of Maryland University College (UMUC), that opened July 17 and runs through Oct. 2.

"This is pretty special," Binstock said. "It's an honor to have a show here where they show prominent Maryland artists and provide such wonderful exposure to Maryland faculty and students."

Binstock began exhibiting his sculptures in 1996 at an arts show in the Riversdale Mansion.

In most of his shows, Binstock has displayed eight to 12 pieces but for the career retrospective, he has 30 pieces of work that span his investigation into stone, steel and glass.

His works have been exhibited throughout the metropolitan area, in his native New York and in Florida.

Binstock had to borrow some of the pieces from collectors in Maryland and New York for the show. As he browses through the exhibit, Binstock said the show reflects 10 years continuity and various inspirations as



some pieces actually date back to his first works in 1995.

"It's exciting to me in that I've never seen all of the work together at one time," Binstock said.

"It's wonderful to see the contrast between my earliest stone and glass and my newest pieces."

He noted, "This is my first time seeing it all here with no one else around. It makes a strong statement."

While some pieces are displayed in a main level hallway, the majority of the exhibit is lined on either side of the basement floor, the overhead lights appearing to playfully dance in the glass sculptures.

"I'm so used to doing this..." Binstock said as he reached to one of his pieces and a voice-activated sensor warns him to step away from the artwork.

Marilyn Maupin Hart, the director of the university's arts program, said she has

been working with Binstock for years to set up the show.

"I really like his work as it's interesting and challenging because his work involves glass, we were trying to figure out how best to display it because we have a lot of public visiting here," she said.

Hart describes Binstock's pieces as being on the cutting edge of the art world. "He's exploring new ideas and challenging how we think about art," she said. "It's a very strong exhibit with pieces that make their own statement and stand alone."

UMUC does not run a usual schedule of exhibits. Two to three artists are selected for exhibits throughout the year. The gallery is booked until 2008.

"To be selected for this show is an honor," Binstock said. "This show is three months long and provides wonderful exposure to the work."

Email Jeffrey K. Lyles at
jlyles@gazette.net

A Review Steel Sculpture at Gallery

by Dennis Jeltian

A new exhibit "Dialogues in Steel and Stone" opened at the Gallery in the Greenbelt Library on November 1. The exhibit is the work of sculptor Alan Binstock.

Right at the door is a tall sculpture named Pilgrim. It suggests a human form. The only significant part of the body is the head, which is merely outlined. The head is dominated by a huge nose. There is something whimsical and funny about the human form reduced to this giant nose. Pilgrim stands watch over the door and the exhibit, on guard against anything untoward; sniffing the passing breeze for any reaction to the exhibit. One can imagine the head swiveling, like a radar antenna, to sniff in another direction.

But we must respect Binstock's name Pilgrim. He places Pilgrim at the door to suggest the spiritual journey he offers to share with the viewer. The nose reminds us to sniff out the meaning and the values of Binstock's work. Pilgrim makes a strong first step on the journey.

Aspiring Flight

The second piece is called Aspiring Flight. It is a bow held horizontally, the arrow ready to fly straight up. The bow is envisioned at the instant just before the arrow is released. This creates strong tension in the work. You keep expecting the arrow to be released and whiz up out of sight.

The third piece is called Sentinel. It is definitely anthropomorphic. But you might have trouble identifying the exact part of the anatomy. It might be a giant ear, showing abstract connections to the brain and the rest of the body; a metaphor for another sense of perception. Or it might be half of a human skull showing some of the interior workings and connections.

Studied Yoga

By combining both images Binstock seems to suggest that we should perceive carefully and that

we should question our perceptions.

Binstock studied yoga at an ashram in Connecticut, and later became a teacher and director of the Boulder Colorado Integral Yoga Institute. He is interested in and concerned with the culture of India, and Hindu themes. Several of his works show this influence. A number of pieces are sexual in nature. They are done with the frankness and simplicity one might find in Hindu literature. There is nothing offensive here, but, then, obscenity, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder.

There are other references to India and its culture. There is a humorous piece called Garuda. It appears to be a cobra-like creature rearing up. But there is no menace here, Garuda has a comically squashed head on a long thin stalk, surrounded by what seems to be a large metal gorget. In fact, Garuda is a mythical Hindu peacock. The gorget represents the spread peacock fan. An engaging piece on any level.

The Warrior

In the Mahabharata (the legend of the great Bharat dynasty of India) the warrior Arjuna pauses before the crucial battle to talk to Lord Krishna. Arjuna's duty, as a warrior, is to fight against evil, but his enemies are his teachers and his own family. Arjuna does not want to break the taboo against raising arms against his own family. Binstock's Arjuna's Quandary expresses the dilemma perfectly. There is a great pierced shield. Through the center are crossed weapons, the whole seemingly welded in place, preventing any action.

Forbearer

Another interesting piece is called Forbearer. It's a short human form. The main part of the body is an elongated white stone head. The shape and preparations suggest a doddering old man. The white stone suggests the white hair of old age. The head is supported by a steel spine encrusted by curving steel blood vessels. He seems to bear a tall ceremonial mace. The angle of the mace suggests forward motion. The overall effect is of some pensioner leading a ceremonial procession. The title Forbearer should be understood in a number of ways.

Lastly, there is Binstock's Sun Yantra. This is a large abstract piece. The base of the structure is a large ring of black granite supported in a way that makes it seem to float in the air. A neat trick for an object that must weigh several hundred pounds. Shot through the center are a number of interwoven geometric shapes in steel in several planes. This piece is easily the most complex in the exhibit. It deserves extra contemplation.

Binstock comments about his work, "Whether we go to the depths of outer space or the inner space of our own consciousness, we are seekers on a path, and this path is unique for each of us. Working with material, space and light, offers opportunity to express reflections of moments; the sign posts, teachers, and companions, on my path." One might add, "on our paths." Binstock offers an interesting, amusing path worthy of more than one visit.

Thirteen of the fourteen pieces are for sale. Call Alan Binstock at 301-277-5240.

The exhibit is open through Friday, November 28. The Gallery is open Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 2 - 5 p.m. and 6:30 - 8:45 p.m., and Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 2 - 5 p.m.

By combining both images Binstock seems to suggest that we should perceive carefully and that

Glass becomes art in the hands of local sculptor

by Jeffrey Lyles
Staff Writer

Every day, from across the street, the stranger would come to Allan Binstock's home and observe the sculpture Binstock created for his wife "A Winged Heart for Carol" that sat in the Binstock's front yard.

The Christmas lights adorning the wings and heart illuminate the Mount Rainier evening as well as the stranger's spirits.

"The woman had a heart condition and told me she would sit across the street and meditate on the qualities of the heart when she looked at my piece and that really helped her," Binstock said. "I really couldn't respond because I was standing in front of her with tears coming down my face."

Binstock continues to light the sculpture every night, never knowing who may also be inspired by the piece.

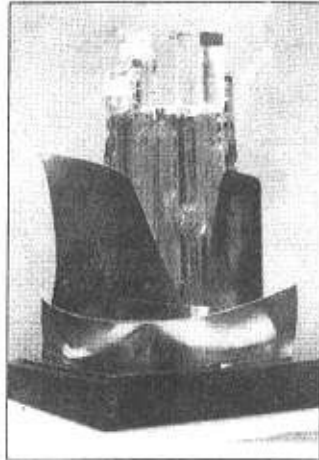
"It seems like we're at a time when we need some light and hope," Binstock said.

While attending the New York City's High School of Music and Art, Binstock said he was immediately drawn to the three-dimensional form, which he attempts to incorporate in all of his work.

Although he enjoyed sculpting, Binstock said he wasn't consistent with it as he did not find a compelling need to sculpt until he became an architect.

"The discipline of graduate school at the University of Maryland and my early years as an architect really drove home the notion for me that working with three-dimensional forms was going to be my ultimate challenge," Binstock said.

Inspired by the new challenge, Binstock began showing his sculptures in the area in 1996 in an arts show in Riversdale Mansion. His technique and approach grew with those opportunities. A focus of Binstock's work is the forming—or be-



One of Binstock's pieces, entitled "Homage" is made of glass and stainless steel.

coming—of life.

The artist said he does his best work when he has inspiration such as his piece "Fruit of Knowledge," which he did for a retiring elementary school teacher.

Glass is one of his favorite mediums.

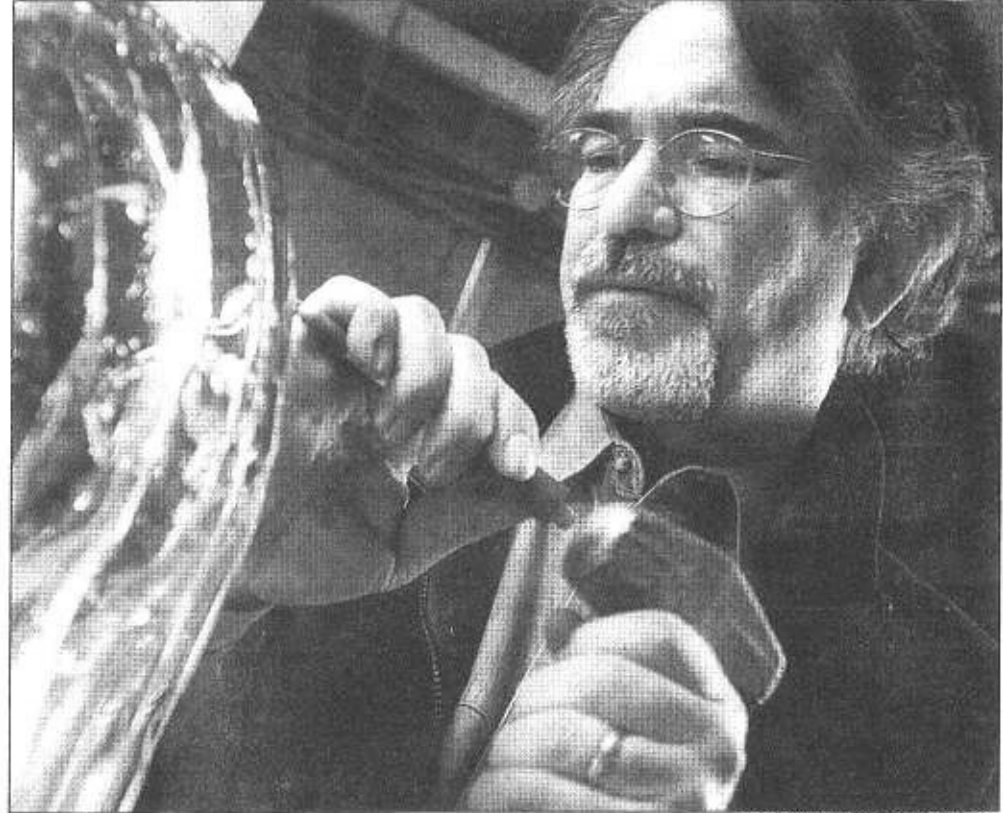
"I love working with glass because you can add color to it, crack it, explode it and it really has such an unexplored nature," Binstock said. "I still intend to work with stainless steel and stone in the future."

The common element of all of his work is that all of his material has its own inner nature, Binstock said.

"They all have a way that they polish, break, join, heat and take color," he said.

Binstock had his own architectural firm where he did residential and small scale commercial work before becoming the facilities planner for the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center in 1992.

While he no longer operates his own firm, the architect in Binstock is still very much alive as he is in



Photos by Barbara L. Seabury/The Gazette

Alan Binstock uses a chisel to shape and model a piece of layered glass called "Early Light" at his Mount Rainier at his studio. A sculptor since the 1960s, Binstock's latest work is on display at the Elizabeth Roberts Gallery in the District for the month of April.

the process of redesigning his home.

His major project however is the completion of his new studio, in his backyard.

"It's my grand dream coming true," he said. "I designed it and have contractors working on it. I hope to have it completed by the spring."

Compared to his current backyard studio, a small shed, the new studio complete with an I-beam and large hanger-style doors is heaven, he said.

"I think his work is wonderful. He's becoming highly recognized in the art world," said Mount Rainier Mayor Bryan Knedler. "His setting up a studio in the city is a visible sign that the arts district is coming together. It's important to see signs that artists are working in the community."

Binstock's designs are not just limited to his own home and studio. He is in the process of creating stainless steel leaves that will go on the side of the Mount Rainier Housing Initiative Partnership

building.

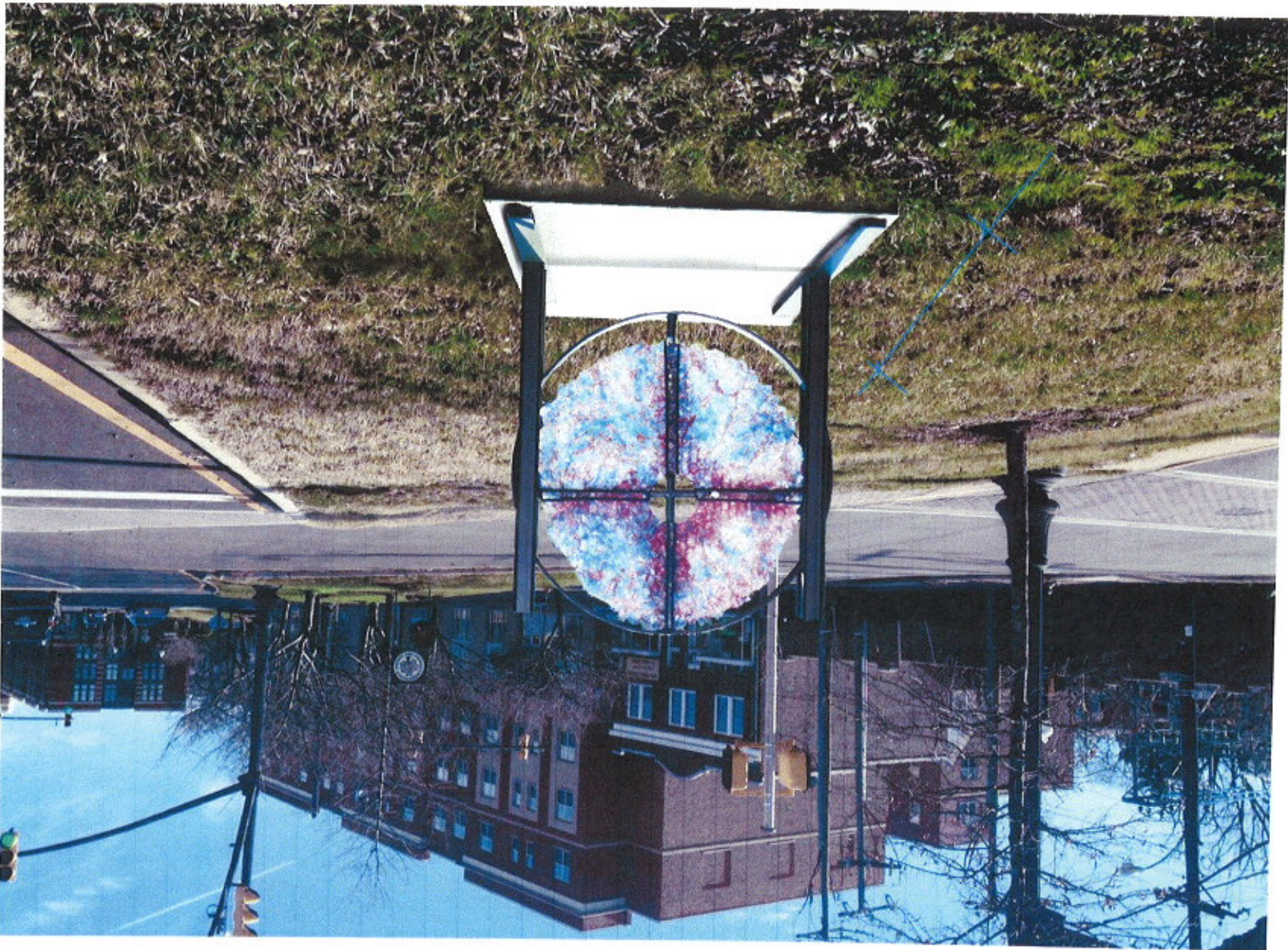
"The leaves are to celebrate that it's both a building for artists and a green building," he said.

In addition to showing his work in the metropolitan area, Binstock has also exhibited in New York and Florida.

Binstock is exhibiting some of his work at the Elizabeth Roberts Gallery, 2108 R St., N.W. in the District from April 1 to 30.

E-mail Jeffrey Lyles at jlyles@gazette.net.

"16"
Glass
Steel Rein
18x10x11



6"
48"

48"



Pilgrim's Quandary
Stainless Steel, Glass
156x144x48



Raintree
Stainless Steel
72x60x32



Raintree on Site
Stainless Steel
72x60x32

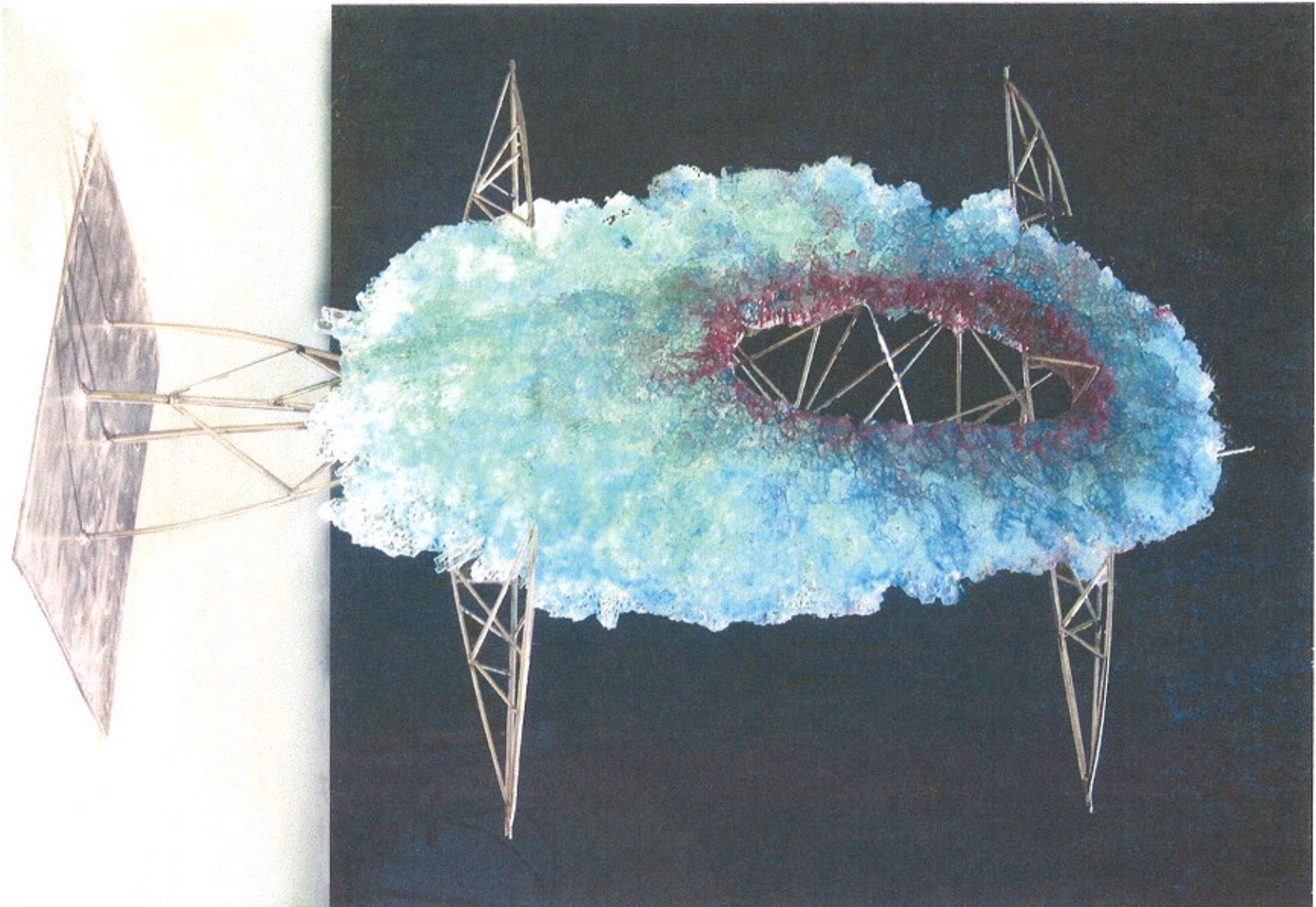


Leaves
Stainless Steel
168x90x42



Opening Reception

Katzen Museum, American University



Quantum LP

Glass, Resin, StainlessSteel

72x42x16



Chapel

Glass, Resin, Stainless Steel

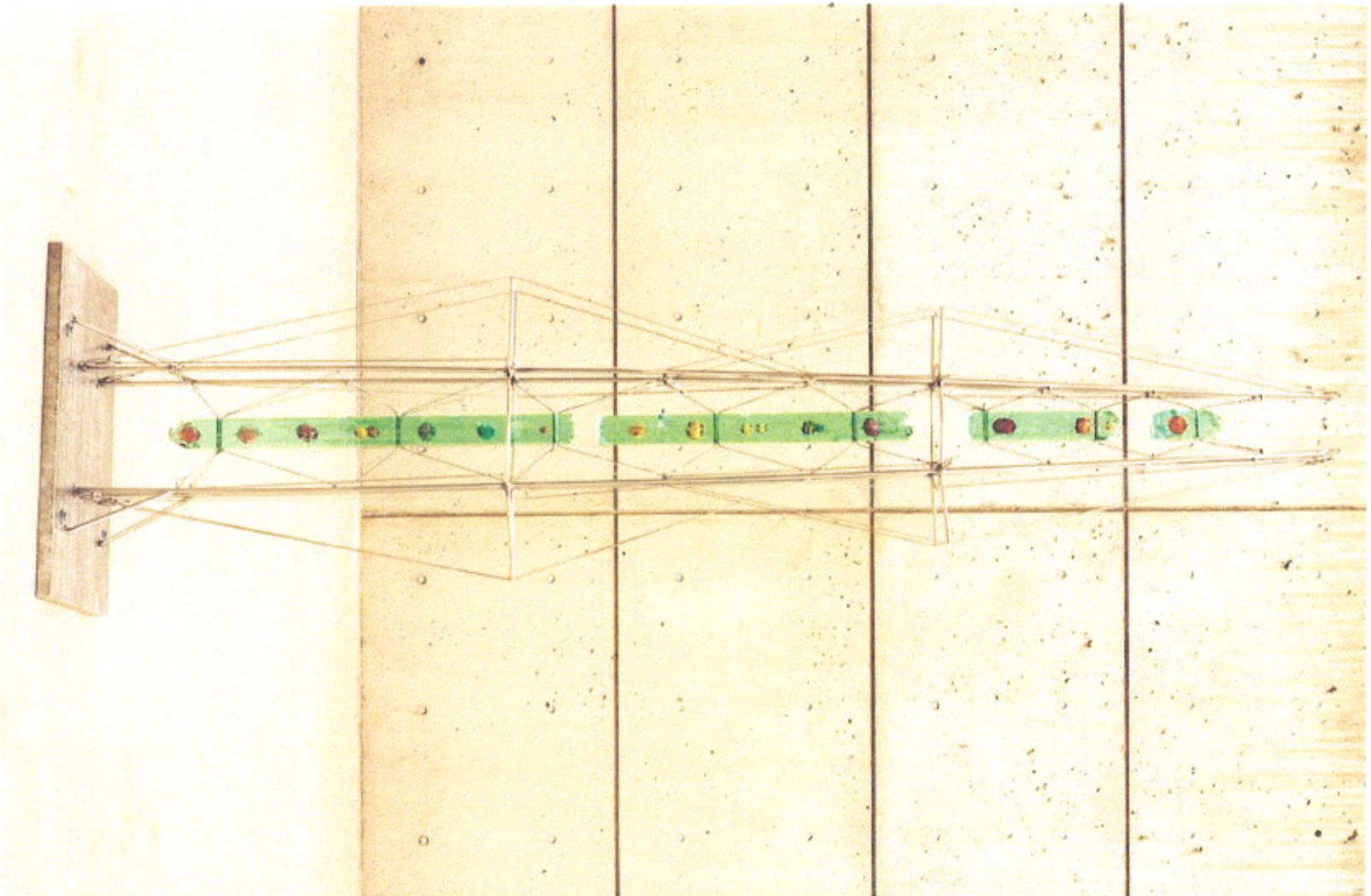
108x72x60



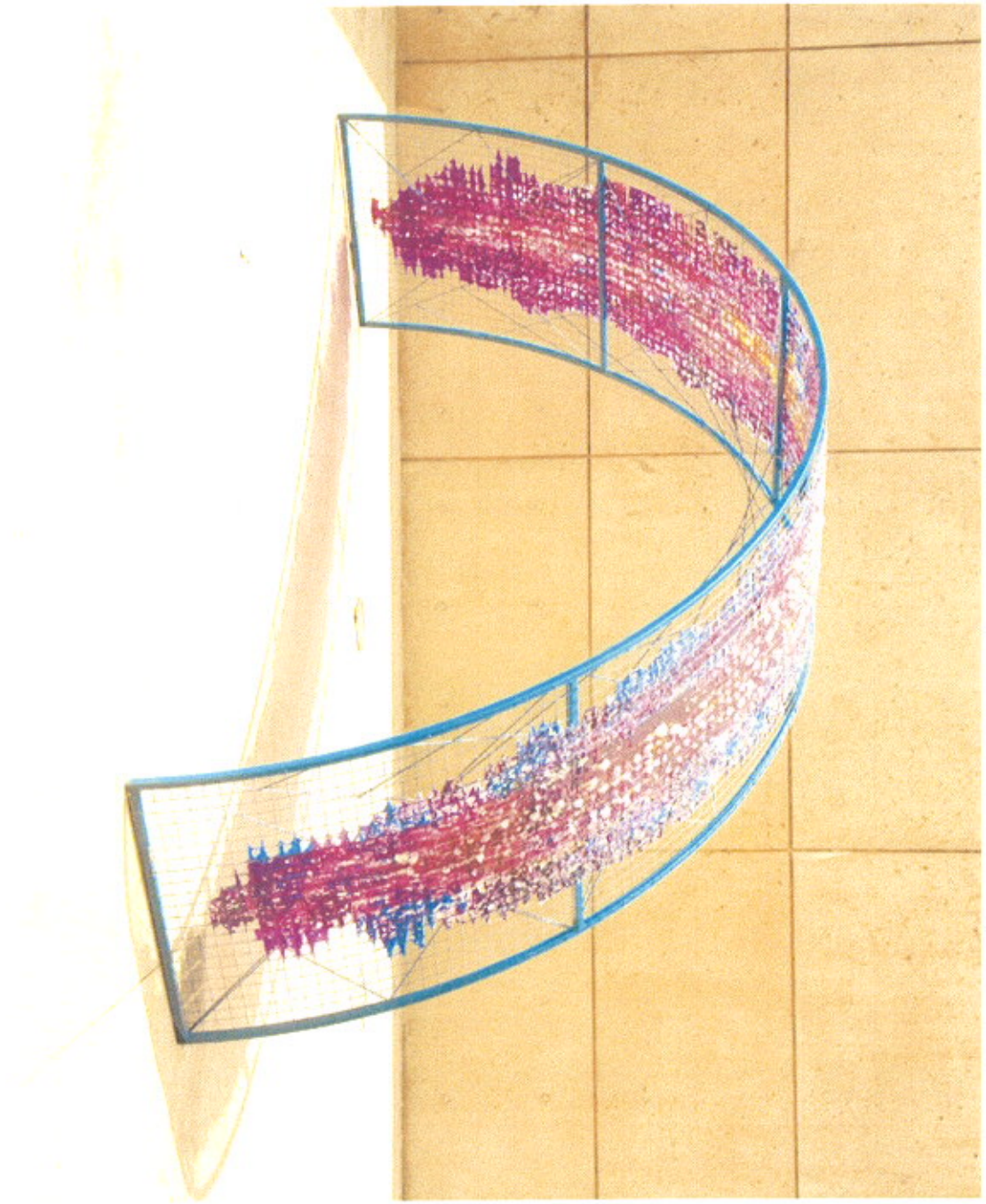
Chapel

Glass, Resin, Stainless Steel

108x72x60



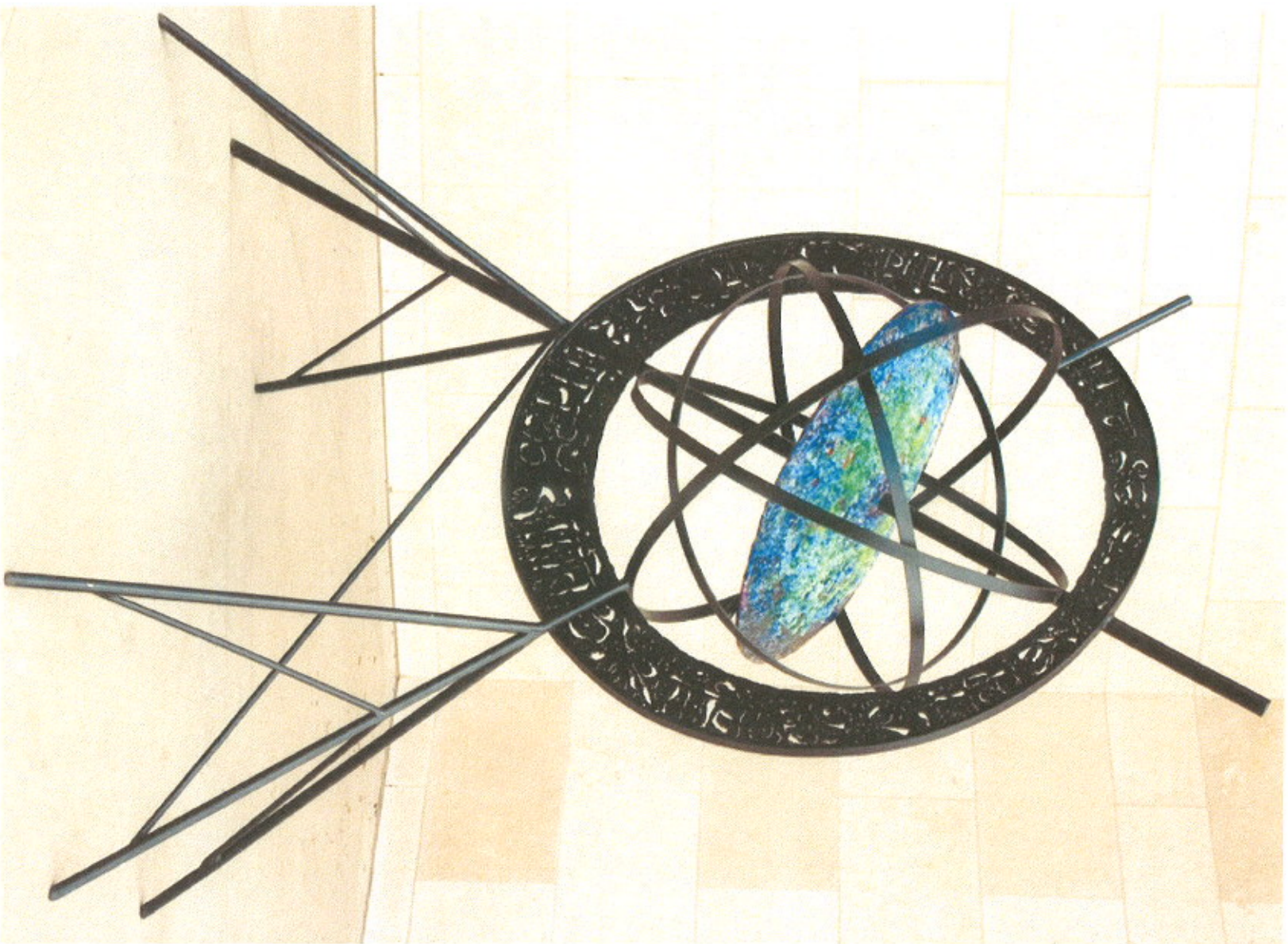
Trance Ender
Glass, Stainless Steel
120x48x48



Mercator

Glass, Resin, Steel

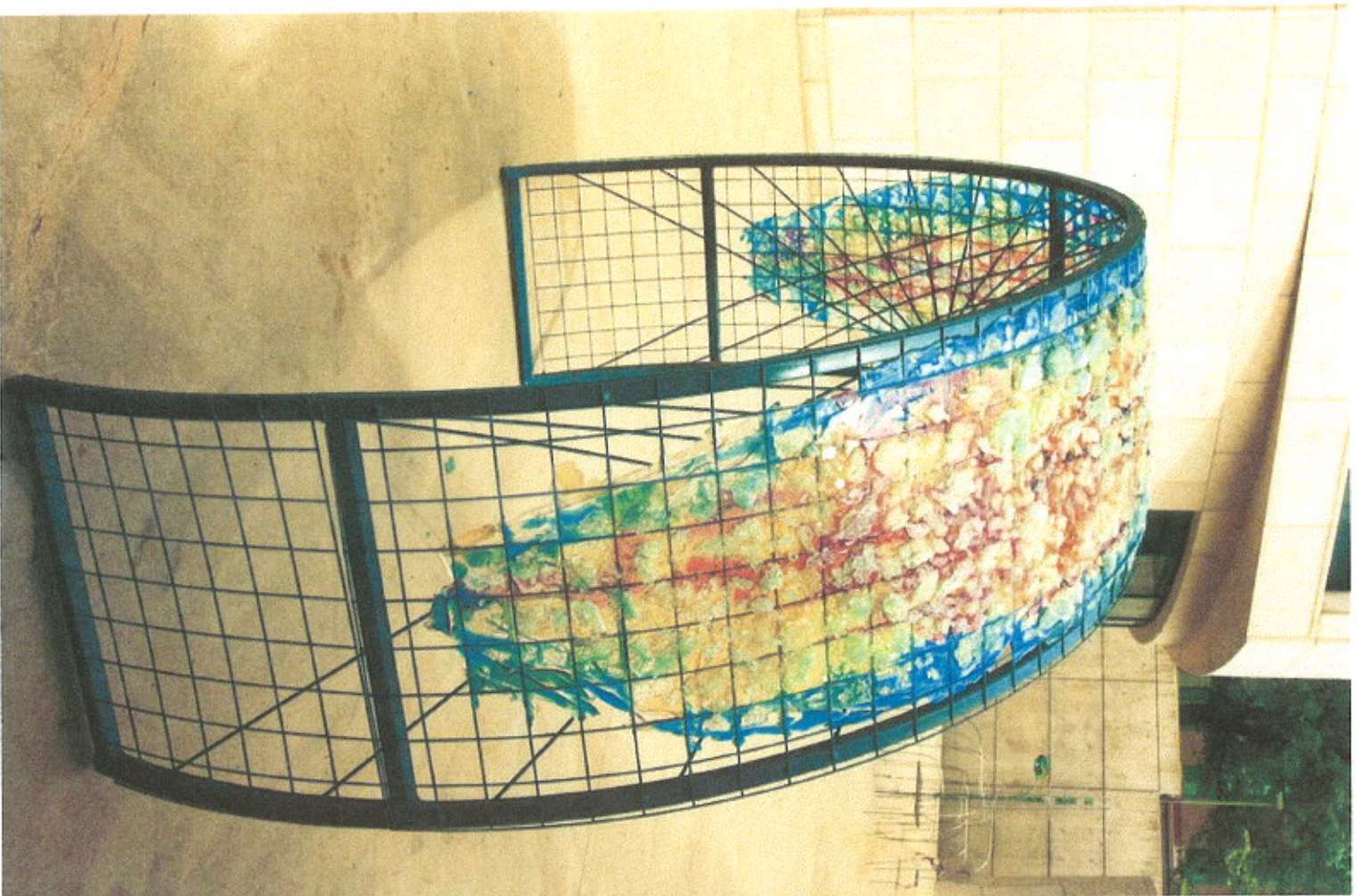
168x72x48



Wayfinder

Glass, Resin, Steel

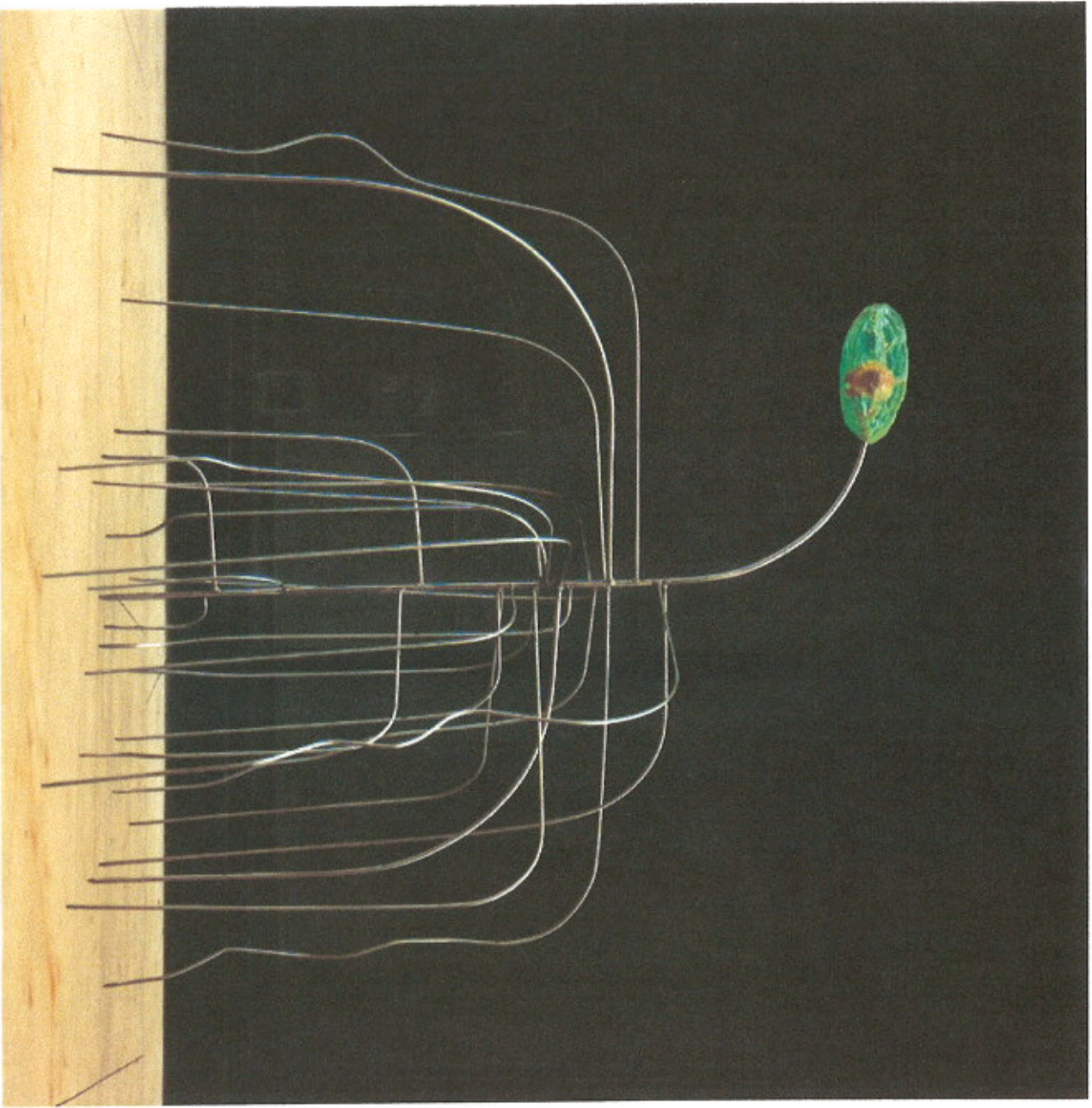
120x96x58



Terra-M

Glass, Resin, Steel

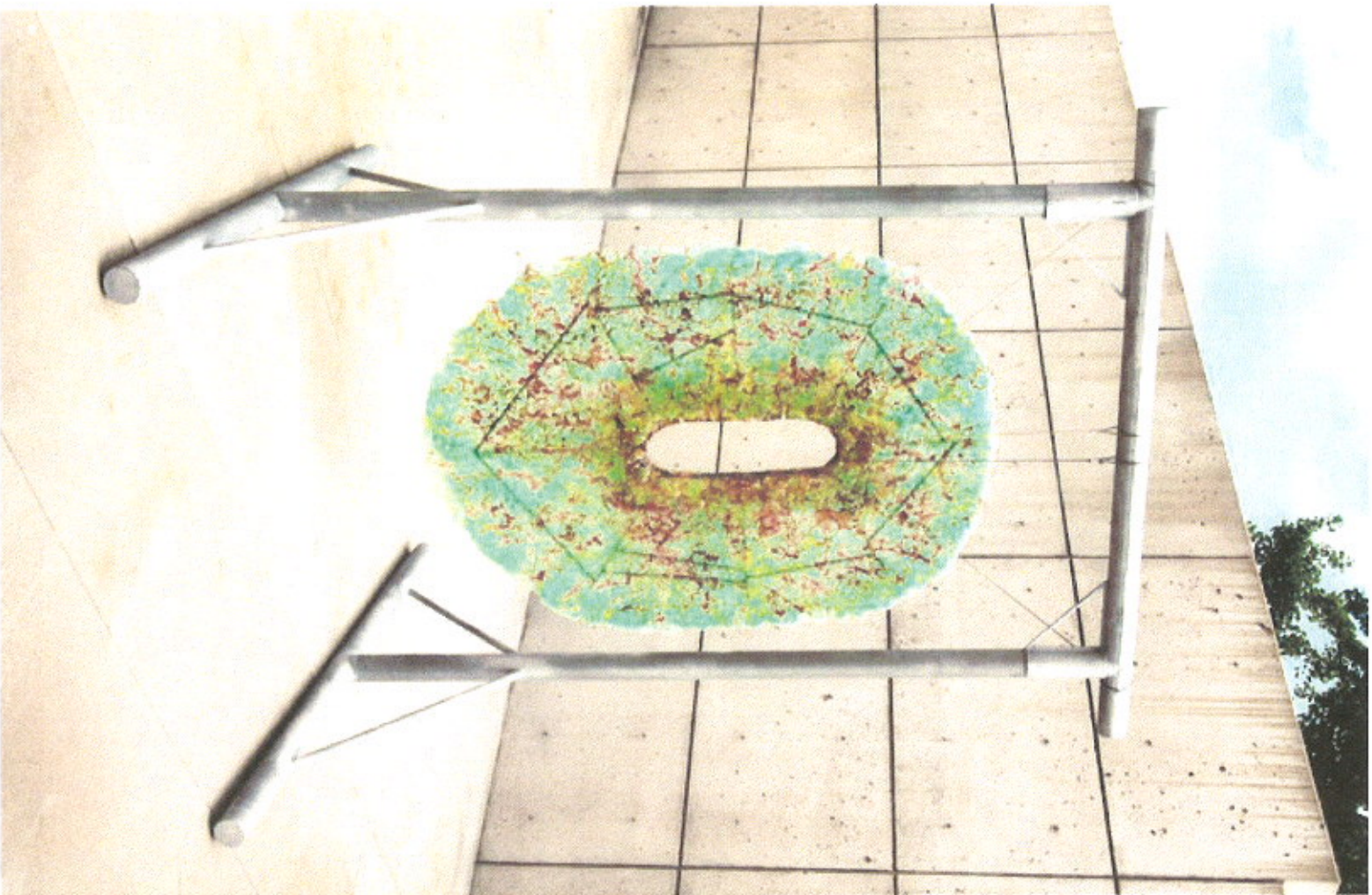
60x96x48



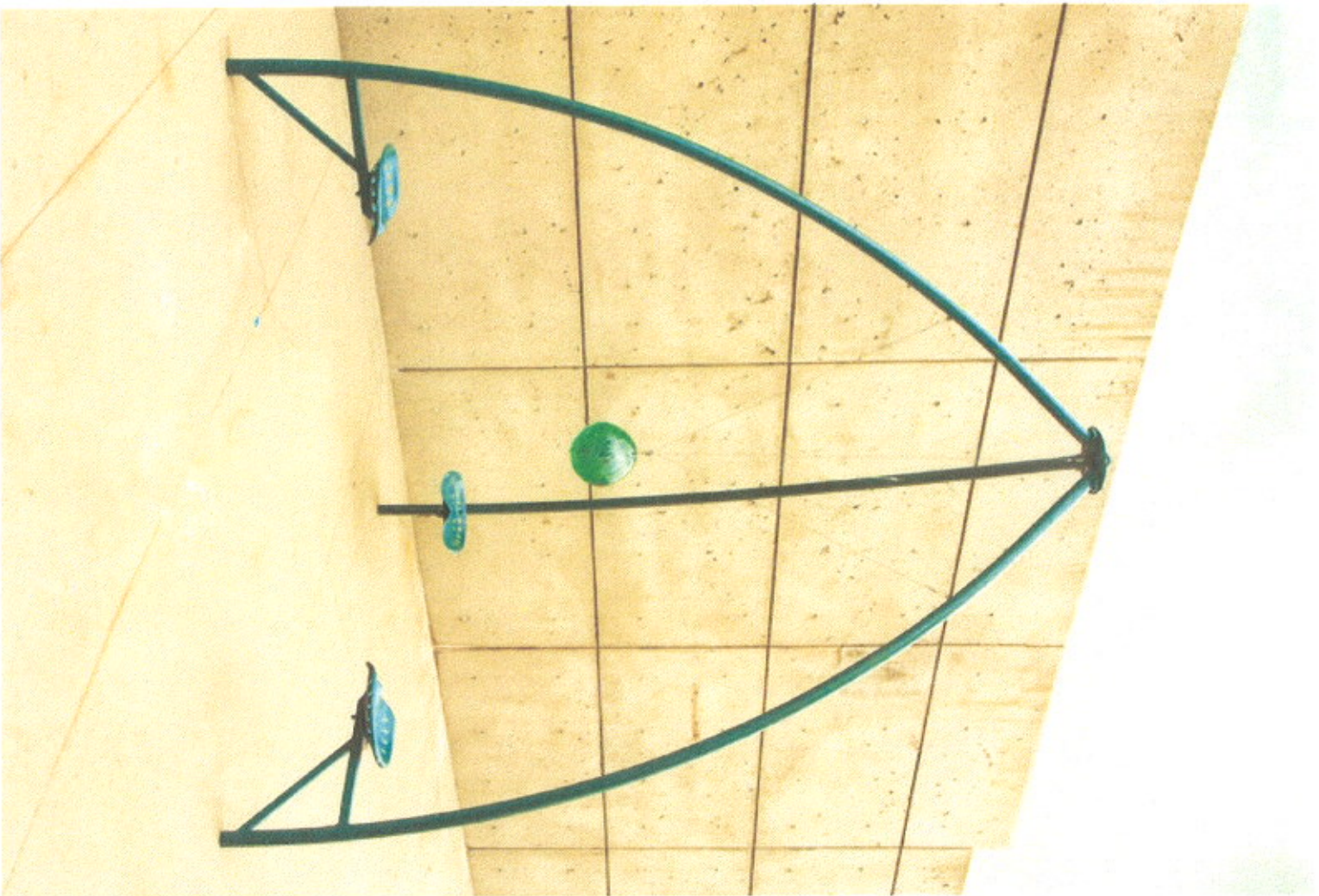
Seedling

Glass, Stainless Steel

72x96x80



Second Portal
Glass, Resin, Steel
96x60x60



Tradac
Glass, Steel
120x90x90

Public Art Application Dominion Heights Art Component DUE: No later than 5:00 pm, January 30, 2012

CONTACT INFORMATION

NAME: Alan Binstock

ADDRESS: 4218 31st Street

Mt. Rainier, MD 20712

TELEPHONE: 301-277-5240 CELL: 301-395-6080

EMAIL: alan@alانبinstock.com

TEAM MEMBERS (if any): Artist – me, Architect – me, Concrete (footing) installers – Wells & Associates -Masons

WEBSITE www.alانبinstock.com (go to large sculpture, Katzen)

ARTISTIC CONCEPT

Provide a vision statement (no more than 150 words: See Attached.

Attach a drawing on 2 foot by 3 foot paper. The drawing should identify dimensions, elevation, and orientation.

List construction materials: Glass Matrix – shattered tempered glass in a urethane resin bed suitable for sun and weather), all exposed edges softened (see Katzen show on website) set in a painted steel construction, anchored to a raised concrete slab with perimeter footings.

COMPLETION TIMELINE

If awarded, artwork should commence at least by May 1, 2012, must be 75% complete by mid-June, and finished, fully installed at designated site on median by August 30, 2012.

AWARD \$17,500.00 for complete and installed art, provided in 3 installments.

QUALIFICATIONS

Attach your resume, portfolio or other evidence of qualification to meet the conditions of the RFP, including training, awards and honors.

Attach photographs of prior works of art. If works are available or on display, provide information about the locations and times that the artwork may be viewed.

Provide 3 references who are familiar with your artistic work and your ability to meet deadlines:

Stuart Eisenberg
Hyattsville (MD) Community Development Corporation - Director
301-799-1426

Tracy Causey
Causey Contemporary Gallery – Owner
92 Wythe Avenue
Brooklyn, NY
(718) 218-8939

Mosey Harrington
6525 Belcrest Rd # 555
Hyattsville, MD
(301) 699-3835