



LOCAL ARTISTS artsTRIBE Explores Farming And Art

In 2008, the seven artists that make up artsTRIBE spent the summer making artwork on-site at the Dane County Farmers' Market, talking to farmers, demonstrating art technique to stoppers-by and making artwork that was inspired by the work and product of the local farming community.

The results of this work will be exhibited at the Overture Gallery Center March 29 until June 7. An artist talk and reception will be offered on Friday, May 1, in the Gallery.

Some of the artists used the food as subject matter, drawing peppers, bok choy and lettuce. Others visited the farm process. And some of the artists incorporated materials directly into their artwork, mixing fresh beeswax in their paint (encaustic), boiling beets to use as dyes and sewing wild grasses into their work. SEED offers these artists a chance

to explore the parallels between artwork and farming. As artists Tom Linfield says:

"They both start with a blank canvas and try to nurture growth, be it newly turned soil or the first tentative brushstrokes on a canvas. Both processes have a certain logic to them, but also a mystery: Where does our food come from? How exactly did that seed turn into my acorn squash? And how did those tubes of paint and boxes of pastels become a bowl of tomatoes?"

Aimee Reid-Rice is a fabric artist and used various materials, including snake grass, to sew into her works.

Bobbette Rose visited a beekeeper and took raw beeswax home, incorporating it into her paintings. This process, known as encaustic, is a centuries-old painting technique.

"The opportunity to work directly with a farmer was intriguing," she says. "I got to learn the beekeeping process and then build the wax in

layers into my artwork – a way of folding in local agriculture as both subject and raw material."

The SEED project stemmed from a variety of issues, including arts accessibility, the burgeoning local food movement, environmental and health concerns, and a desire to celebrate the journey undertaken by both farmers and artists as they seek to share their wares with others.

Some of the artists were members of CSA farms like Troy Gardens and Harmony Valley, which meant they got weekly boxes of produce. Others spent their Saturdays at the Farmers' Market, perusing the stalls with an eye for both aesthetic and nutritional sustenance.

The artists worked with products from a variety of growers, including Harmony Valley Farm, The Bee Charmer Farm, Deerfield Greenhouse, Troy Community Farm, Gentle Breeze Honey, Jones Valley Farm, Wyman Produce, Door Creek

Orchard and JenEhr Family Farm.

The seven artist-members of artsTRIBE are Dana Slowiak, Gary N-ski, Jayne Reid Jackson, Bobbette Rose, Karen Reppen, Aimee Reid-Rice and Tom Linfield.

For more information and links to the artists' individual websites, please visit: www.arts-tribe.com

Clockwise from top left: Bobbette Rose 'Apple'; artsTRIBE at the Food for Thought Festival; Gary N-ski 'Tomato meets Flowers'; Jayne Reid Jackson 'Pears and Glass'; Bobbette Rose; Karen Reppen 'Tomato Cages'; artsTRIBE at the Food for Thought Festival; Aimee Reid-Rice 'Strawberries'; Dana Slowiak 'Crazy Greens'; Karen Reppen; Tom Linfield 'Harmony Valley Peppers'; Aimee Reid-Rice and Tom Linfield.

Photos courtesy of ARTSTRIBE

