

CYNTHIA-REEVES



Steven Siegel, CYNTHIA-REEVES, installation, 2015

STEVEN SIEGEL

BIOGRAPHY: CYNTHIA-REEVES, 1315 MASS MoCA Way, N. Adams, Massachusetts
September 19 - November 1

ARTIST RECEPTION: Saturday, October 10, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

CYNTHIA-REEVES launches their new season at 1315 Mass MoCA Way with BIOGRAPHY, the gallery's debut exhibition of American sculptor, Steven Siegel, since joining the gallery in 2015. A concise show of conceptual installations, Siegel finds his muse through piles of discarded remnants. As an excavator, geologist, sociological commentator and documentarian, Siegel culls through the detritus of our daily lives - plastics, rubber, wires, casings and molded housings - items that speak of a culture unconcerned with the consequences of our ingenuity. For him, they become a portal to another order of inquiry, in which he discerns a future by reading the proverbial 'tea leaves' of waste. It is a geology-in-process that records who we are and how we live.

The concept of 'deep time', coined initially by John McPhee, speaks to the layering of sediment and rock that tells of us our geologic past. This idea sparked a lasting inquiry in Siegel's imagination, and began his on-going artistic interrogation of the essential cycles of deposit and decay that underlie the making of the land.

He brought this inspired understanding of geological events and cycles into his personal interpretations of stratification and compression, and began creating his own 'deep time' evoked through the layering of the immediate past: last's week's newspapers and bits of twine, all of which are wrought into marvelous inventions of texture and color. He builds exciting surfaces that belie the deep time of his creations, deftly interwoven and lyrically presented to us, the viewers, as testament.

When he was given an opportunity to do an outdoor piece on Staten Island, the location of the world's largest landfill, the site-specific work forced him in a new direction, and a deeper way of manifesting his thesis. "If they're putting all of this junk down into the earth," went Siegel's thinking, "what's under there is a new geology that we've created."



Detailed installation views of Steven Siegel's Biography

Twenty feet of his vanguard piece, BIOGRAPHY, are featured in this exhibition. In its entirety, this monumental installation is comprised of ninety sections spanning, collectively, 156 linear feet in its final form. Executed over a five-year period, the piece is a testimonial of his life, our lives: minutiae of day-to-day existence in the 21st century, transformed into an ode to the inherent beauty culled from all manner of materials. Here, the richness and the luxury of the sculpture is undeniable: the vibrancy of palette dancing across this extreme span of tightly woven and interlaced elements, all surprising in their beauty and textural import. Presented on a scale that defies all reason, it is the tiny elements and minor events over the course of its 'deep time' that conspire to make the drama of the whole.

"From afar, BIOGRAPHY looks like a vast topographical map: Cables and hard drives and twinkly lights mime cities; thick black piping and power cords seem like strips of highways; the spines of newspapers resemble the color and texture of beach and mountains; and fluffy carpets in rich browns and oranges recall aerial views of farms. Still, the objects in Biography are the pieces of our environmental crisis--pernicious, toxic, sometimes un-recyclable items that pollute our air and increasingly dominate our earth. As a result, this prodigious mass of art bursts with ambiguity: Siegel simultaneously trumpets our colorful wealth of objects and reminds us that consumption is, for better or worse, the cover of the twenty-first-century biography." - Allese Thomson Baker, Artforum, 2010



Steven Siegel, *Went to Iceland #3*, (2012), mixed media, 48 x 31 x 21 in,
121.92 x 78.74 x 53.34 cm

Complementing the drama and scale of BIOGRAPHY are recent works from his series, *How It Happens* - smaller, impactful works that are either floor-based or shown on pedestals. The change of scale is important, as here the artist is able to demonstrate a capacity for his succinct and pointed use of a narrower range of materials, while nonetheless advancing his thesis. These newer works have a sense of humor, allowing us to pick up on a playfulness, even while surrounded by the overt reminders of our collective willful ignorance when it comes to resources - both natural and manmade.

According to Siegel, "we are part of this amazing system, this universe that is so far beyond our comprehension. I never run out of inspiration; I feel like I'm plugged into something that's so big, I can just take as much as I want whenever I need it. The resources and ideas are there, always." The understanding that he articulates here, more so than any of the rhetoric around sustainability, is an utterly artful manifestation of ecological consciousness.

Steven Siegel (b. 1953) is originally from White Plains, New York, and currently lives in Upstate New York. After graduating from Hampshire College in 1976, Siegel received a Masters of Fine Arts from Pratt Institute in 1978. He is the recipient of numerous grants and awards including; the Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundations grant in support of residency at Grounds for Sculpture (2006), the New York Foundation for the Arts, Ford Foundation, among others. His public art commissions and site-sculptures are widely international including: Blackfoot Pathways, Sculpture in the Wild in Lincoln, MT (2014), Neustadt A.D. Donau, Germany (2014), the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, MA (2009), Arte Sella, Italy (2009), and an upcoming installation in Meran, Italy later this year. Siegel has exhibited extensively in some of the country's best outdoor museums including; Grounds for Sculpture, Hamilton, NJ (2006); Wave Hill, Bronx, NY, (2004, 1998); Stone Quarry Hill Sculpture Park, Casenovia, NY, (1999); Contemporary Art Center of Virginia, Virginia Beach, VA (2008), and Motalvo Gallery, Saratoga, CA (2006); among others.



CYNTHIA-REEVES, located at 1315 Mass MoCA Way in North Adams, is open Wednesday - Sunday, 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. This auxiliary footprint features experimental works from our program of international artists, in conjunction with our primary gallery located at The Barn, 28 Main Street in Walpole, New Hampshire. Currently on view there is [Sarah Amos: Select Works, 2009 - 2015](#), a reflective exhibition of the master printmaker and recent Joan Mitchell awardee's signatory monoprints and collagraphs juxtaposed with her latest vanguard approach in woven materials and felt. The exhibition continues through November 14. For information on all current exhibitions at the gallery, please refer to our [online](#) gallery or call 212.714.0044.

[Steven Siegel BIOGRAPHY video](#)
[For more information](#)

CYNTHIA-REEVES represents an international roster of established artists who share a process-apparent sensibility in their art. We are committed to artwork that demonstrates an authentic voice, an innovative use of materials and an appreciation of the mark in diverse media: site-based installation, video, sculpture, painting and works on paper. A sub-text to the gallery's program is artwork that provokes a discourse around the convergence of art and science, as well as our relationship to the natural world - a discourse essential to the examination of contemporary art and culture within the context of these broader challenges.

Please refer to the gallery's [News and Events](#) tab on our website for the latest information concerning our exhibitions, public art initiatives, and art fair schedule. You can find additional information and images on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Pinterest](#). As always, we look forward to connecting with you at our galleries, public art events, and at the art fairs, and continuing in the conversation around the artists we so respect and admire.