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Of Time & Space

Artist explores the outdoors, brings it into gallery, to ETSU

Dust, dirt, sand and water fascinate Joyce Ogden – not wiping them away but experimenting with them, observing them – investigating, she calls it.

Ogden moved from the city of Louisville to a farm in Southern Indiana so she could experiment daily, walking the woods, raising chickens and digging the soil, not simply for personal enjoyment, but also for professional purposes. “It’s wonderful,” Ogden says. “I feel like it’s a big collaboration, and that really excites me. It’s a collaboration with nature.”

Her profession is sculpture, but her media, in addition to dust, dirt, sand and water, are as varied as the elements of nature – red clay, seeds, nut husks and seed pods, chicken eggs. She often sculpts the natural elements into shapes, imposes water, outdoor elements and/or time upon them and then observes the transformation. One writer calls her art “ephemeral time-based art.”

Because of these unique environmental and sustainability related explorations that she brings into the gallery or just outside gallery doors, M. Wayne Dyer, a professor in the Department of Art and Design, said Ogden was an outstanding choice to act as juror for fall semester’s *2015 FL3TCH3R Exhibit: Social & Politically Engaged Art*. Ogden was not able to give the traditional exhibition artist talk in fall, so ETSU’s Mary B. Martin School of the Arts and the Department of Art & Design are sponsoring **her artist talk on Wednesday, March 2, at 7 p.m. in ETSU’s Ball Hall Auditorium**. A reception will follow in Slocumb Galleries. Talk and reception are free and open to the public.

As the 2015 *FL3TCH3R* juror, Ogden selected 65 works by 57 artists from 31 states and six different countries for inclusion in the exhibit, out of 283 pieces submitted by about 100 artists.

The annual *FL3TCH3R Exhibit* is in memory of former ETSU student and senior in Art & Design Fletcher H. Dyer, who died in a motorcycle accident in 2009 at the age of 22. The exhibit raises funds to support and endow a scholarship for ETSU Art & Design students.

“With her dynamic work, doing socially engaged pieces in terms of the environment that have an organic perspective, we wanted her to come during the show,” Dyer says. “Our ideal would be that when someone jurors, they would be able to be there during the exhibit, but that’s not always possible. We are excited she can visit this spring.

“The artist talk is really an opportunity for the students, faculty and public to get to know her and actually get to know about how she approaches her work and how she views what she’s doing.”

While at ETSU, Ogden – who is a faculty member at the Kentucky College of Art and Design at Spalding University – will also give a demonstration/presentation of a current technique she uses in her work and spend time in critiques with BFA and MFA students.

Ogden received her MFA from the Henry Radford Hope School of Fine Arts at Indiana University, Bloomington, and has exhibited throughout the Southeast. She is a founding member of ENID, a Louisville-

based women sculptors organization, and has been the recipient of grants and awards, including the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant Program, the Kentucky Foundation for Women Sallie Bingham Award and the Al Smith Fellowship from the Kentucky Arts Council.

While Ogden's original focus in college was on fibers and ceramics, her experiments began to evolve, to include water and utilize "form and space and the relationship with materials to form and space," she says from her Indiana studio. "I was just looking at materials that I was working with and thinking about how they responded and how they reacted to a physical force. What would they do if you hung them or how did they respond to gravity?"

Whether it was dripping water eroding clay or rock, sand being poured through a sieve by the viewer or the elements of nature breaking down unfired clay bullet-shaped cones, Ogden's explorations take her from her studio into the gallery and often outside the gallery building.

"My work really just comes from observing the world around me," Ogden says. "I'm fascinated by what I see and fascinated by nature and really slowing down and taking the moment to notice something that we have probably taken for granted before."

Her studio is full of her "investigations" and collections of "artifacts" to be observed – tightly sculpted cones of Indiana red earth or seeds, 365 multi-colored chicken eggshells gathered one at a time for a year, Petri dishes of dirt and decaying material that are slowly changing as the days on the calendar tick off.

"Transformations are inevitable phenomena," says Jenn Toby in her curatorial statement for a show featuring Ogden's evolutionary work. "They can be slow, such as gradual developments within the roots of evolution, or practically imperceptible, like how our days are growing milliseconds longer each century. Transformation also occurs rapidly, as the ever-changing neuroplasticity of our brain shapes our persona ... Inspiration to realization, the artistic process is a direct reaction to cognitive and environmental change.

"As the Greek philosopher Heraclitus puts it, 'The only constant is change.' "

"Many people think of sculpture as very static, very still, because it's bronze, it's marble or some heavy material," says Anita DeAngelis, art professor and director of event co-sponsor Mary B. Martin School of the Arts at ETSU, "but Joyce's work has a delicacy and motion about it. In a lot of ways, the passage of time is such an important part of her work. I expect her perspective on 'sculpture' will be fascinating."

For more information on Ogden, visit <http://www.joyceogden.com>. To learn more about the *FL3TCH3R* exhibit, visit <http://fl3tch3rexhibit.com/> or more about Fletcher Dyer at <http://fletcherdyer.com>.

For more information on Ogden's visit or Mary B. Martin School of the Arts, please visit www.etsu.edu/martin or call 423-439-TKTS (8587). For disability accommodations, call the ETSU Office of Disability Services at 423-439-8346.