

art ltd.[®] may 2009 review



"THE SHINE SHACK," 2009

Mike Shine

WOOD, PAINT, AND OBJECTS, 50' X 20' (INSIDE/OUTSIDE INSTALLATION)

PHOTO: CHRIS HELTAI

SAN FRANCISCO

"Inside/Outside: Artist Environments" at the Museum of Craft and Folk Art

From Prehistoric cave paintings to recent HGTV home makeovers, there are countless examples of our drive to create uniquely personal surroundings. The current exhibition "Inside/Outside: Artist Environments" at the Museum of Craft and Folk Art examines immersive environments ranging from homes, front yards, and gardens to visual representations of imagined worlds. Using hubcaps, antlers, seashells and other unconventional materials, artist environment-builders construct significant structures and assemblages that express highly personal worldviews.

Entering the *Art Shack*, a new commission by Northern California artist Mike Shine, is like traveling back in time; the décor consists of 1960s and '70s era furnishings including an eight-track player and vintage television. Against this retro backdrop, Shine presents stylized driftwood paintings and murals that fuse eclectic influences of surf and skateboard culture with Nordic folk art. More than just a private retreat, the installation is a participatory art project where visitors can read, draw or paint. Shine utterly transforms the white-walled gallery into a meticulous replica of his Bolinas, California cabin, creating a remarkable immersive experience.

The Museum's window features Megan Wilson's installation, *Home Sectional: MOCFA*, which consists of patchwork covered walls and jars of mysterious brightly-colored liquids. This conglomeration of somewhat odd objects is a small-scale reprise of *Home 1996-2008*, a site-specific installation in Wilson's San Francisco apartment that investigated ideas of comfort and protection. "Inside/Outside" showcases California's famous folk artists as well as disabled artists Merritt Wallace and Jacob Sockness. The latter's hand-drawn maps of cities embody a metaphorical fabrication of fantasy worlds. Folk art environments such as the Watts Towers built by Sam Rodia and Grandma Primbrey's Bottle Village in Simi Valley are presented through documentation. This display of text panels and photographs only modestly portrays these otherwise dynamic and mesmerizing landmarks.

Overall, "Inside/Outside" endeavors to expose artistic practices that flourish outside the confines of the gallery. With its broad approach, this exhibition sheds light on the definition of home and personal space, and inspires us to reconsider how our surroundings can uniquely express our own individual worldview.

—KRISTEN EVANGELISTA