A.I.R. Gallery is pleased to announce *Tuscan Spring: Rubbings, Scrolls and Other Works*, an exhibition of recent work by New York artist Nancy Azara, curated by Harry J. Weil. The show is on view from January 7 to February 7, 2016 with an opening reception Thursday, January 7th, 6-8pm.

In *Tuscan Spring*, Nancy Azara uses a "leaf" theme with scroll works on Mylar, made in Greve, Italy. These collaged scrolls with tracings of leaves and trees and marks made from woodcuts, are painted and slashed sections, cut out and often reversed and glued. The leaves are from a New York domestic rhododendron plant as well as from the fields of the Tuscan countryside.

Azara’s nearly three decade long obsession with leaves, her rubbing, carving, and collaging of them, is not an effort to preserve them as a naturalist would in a scrap book. Her intent is to tap into their inherent energy - a holistic energy that reverberates inside all living things - made tangible here in a vivid palate of blues, reds, whites and purples. Azara feels her way through the leaves, navigating their contours to create silhouetted patterns across long narrow scrolls or groupings in complex collages.

The artist speaks of the connection to her body, particularly in the scrolls, which have “a tree/spine relationship which evokes the body as source for ‘spirit’.“ There are important references to Indian and Tibetan works and to Western mysticism, especially theosophy of the 19th and early 20th century. This is evident in the work as it connects artist to nature and nature to the artist. The use of the matte surface on Mylar further adds to an ethereal quality. There is a vitality bubbling just below the surface that wavers between the signature of the harried imprints of the leaves from the woodcuts, and her gracefully composed compositions of cut out leaves. This complementing of material, form, and texture is simultaneously a releasing and relinquishing to the leaves, their presence, and their spirit.

She will be showing five scrolls from the *Greve Series*, approximately 7 ½ ft x 2 ft, four works from her *White Works*, 4ft x 2ft and a selection of smaller collages and rubbings and a wall sculpture.