

Ulster Publishing.com

Home SEARCH

Info

Calendar MAP

Classifieds

Newspapers

- WOODSTOCKTIMES
- NEW PALTZTIMES
- SAUGERTIES TIMES
- KINGSTON TIMES
- DUTCHESS BEAT
- MID-HUDSON POST PIONEER

DISCUSSION BOARD

ADVERTISING INFO

Subscribe



Saugerties Times - Featured Arts

9/3/2009

The Skeleton of America

Artist invites builders to contribute to exhibit comprised entirely of 2x4s

by Crispin Kott

Saugerties-based artist Ze'ev Willy Neumann has long tried to be inclusive with his art, using familiar shapes and materials to create something new. And in an effort to extend that philosophy, Neumann is calling for area residents to submit works for inclusion in an upcoming exhibit, appropriately named dubbed 2X4.

The studio and gallery at 42 Livingston Street is usually the sole domain of Neumann's own work, including a recent installation best seen shortly after sundown that utilizes colored lights on a series of expansive sculptures made from dowels and other found items. But in the foreground of the curious shapes and forms seen through the gallery's windows are two smaller pieces that are signs of things to come.

The first, a piece spelling out "2X4" with actual 2x4s, serves as something of an introduction to a show Neumann hopes will include pieces created by people familiar with the materials, but unaccustomed to building works of a non-utilitarian nature.

Neumann is calling for "builders, carpenters and makers of things" to design a piece using 2x4s as the primary material, with the only other limitation the necessity that each submission measure no more than two feet in either direction. There will be room in the show for some larger pieces outside the gallery as well.

Neumann devised the show as a means to include people who might not usually step foot in an art gallery.

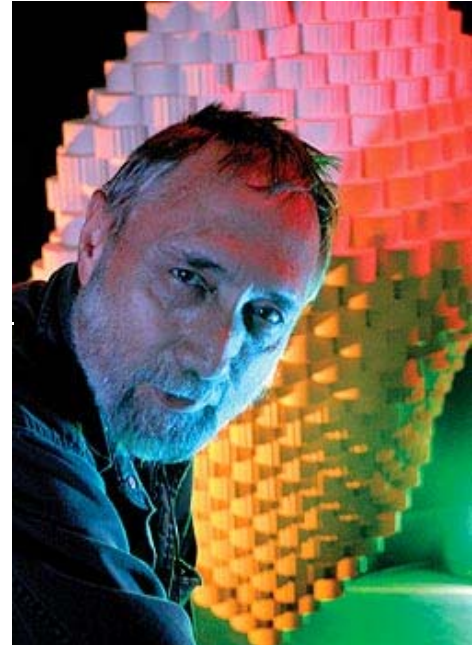
"Eye candy, I call my gallery," he said. "People are passing by with their cell phone, not paying attention, and I was thinking of how I could reach people who might be intimidated by art. I said, 'I'm going to make a show that involves everybody.'"

Once the basic premise was in place, choosing the medium was a cinch.

"We all relate to the 2x4," Neumann said. "It's the skeleton of America. And it's been the prime size of building material all throughout the world."

Aside from the aforementioned size and material restrictions, Neumann said he hopes the potential artists will use their own creativity as a guide.

"Let them do whatever they want with it, as long as they use that material," he said. "They can paint it, chop it whatever, as long as it's a thing of beauty and inspirational. This way, I'm going to have the every day person who is finally going to have a piece in the gallery. 'You see that piece? That's my piece. I'm an artist.' I want to have the connection between art and every day life. That's my mission."



Ze'ev Willy Neumann in his Livingston Street gallery. [Fionn Reilly]

Published 9/3/2009

JUMPTO DEPARTMENT

SPECIAL OFFERS

Sign our mailing list and receive free updates



name

email



Feature Story

Brushing up on Woodstock



Music

The rhythm queens



Art

Atlantic crossing, Hudson voyage



Movie Review

Peripheral vision



Night Sky

Spectral spectacle



Neumann encouraged interested parties to begin their pieces now so they're completed in time for the open submission period, which will take place at his gallery from September 14-18, 5-8 p.m.

Entrants will be required to pay a \$10 fee for use to purchase food and drinks for the show's opening on Saturday, September 26.

"If it sells, I'm also going to charge 25 percent," Neumann said. "If you're not going to do that, nobody is going to take it seriously."

Neumann said he hoped the show will bring in numerous submissions, but even if the interest is limited, he'll still be satisfied.

"If I inspire one person, I'll be absolutely delighted," Neumann said. "If one person will find the artist in him, mission accomplished. Snap out of it and see if you can make something that would surprise yourself."

The other piece in the window of Neumann's gallery is a small red picture frame, a miniature of a much larger frame he created for the Saugerties Beach as part of his "15 Minutes of Frame," which has been placing similar pieces in a wide range of outdoor settings since 2006. Rain cancelled a beach party he'd planned for last Friday, celebrating the installation's perseverance against vandals and the end of summer. A rain date is planned, but not yet set.

"This frame was vandalized, I think by a group of kids who jumped on it and orchestrated a breakdown," Neumann said. "I was a little depressed over it. I almost retreated, but I said no way. I got another piece of molding to fix it, and now I'm going to celebrate."

Neumann said his response to the damage was similar to what he's done with his submission to the Hors'n Around installation, among the first damaged. Eventually, many of the sculptures were moved to Main Street storefronts to protect against the future vandalism, something Neumann wasn't pleased about. He advocates a "turn the other cheek" approach.

"A piece of art is broken, like what we have with the horses here, and we retreated and put them in the windows," he said. "Bad idea. I asked my horse to be left alone. I watch it. They broke the fish, they returned it, I fixed. The idea is this: They break a piece of art, you fix it. They break it, you fix it again until they get tired of breaking it. How else are we going to put art in public places?"

For more information on Neumann and the 2X4 show, visit www.zwneumann.com.



Click here to discuss this article in our forum.

**[Home](#) | [Calendar](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Info](#)
[Woodstock](#) | [New Paltz](#) | [Saugerties](#) | [Kingston](#) | [Highland Mid-Hudson](#) | [Southern Ulster](#)**

© 2009 Ulster Publishing, Inc.

