

# The Big Scale Down

LONG-RUNNING ANNUAL 'SMALL IMAGES' SHOW IS GATHERED INTO THE NEW TEMPORARY ATKINSON GALLERY SPACE AT CITY COLLEGE



'Eye Candy,' Frank Krifka



'Pink Fog,' Phoebe Brunner



By Josef Woodard,  
News-Press Correspondent

## Small Images

**When:** through Nov. 2

**Where:** Atkinson Gallery, SBCC, 721 Cliff Dr.

**Hours:** 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Mon. through Thurs.,  
10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fri. and Sat.

**Information:** 965-0581, Ext. 3484,

[sbcc.edu/art/website/index.php?page=146](http://sbcc.edu/art/website/index.php?page=146)

For many years, the prized local tradition of the annual "Small Images" exhibition at Santa Barbara City College has been an occasion when visitors could be found squinting and getting up close and personal with art which is, by nature and curatorial mandate, minute. Viewers have also traditionally had to deal with the innate distraction of the stunning harbor and city view from the Atkinson Gallery.

But now that the gallery space is being renovated for a possible two-year period, the temporary, enclosed ad hoc Atkinson gallery on the West end of campus strangely puts the show in a different light. Oddly enough, we're drawn more deeply into the art here, and prone to apply more concentrated attention to the art in the room. And there is much to admire and apply concentration to with this year's crop of wee art.

As usual, the variety of approaches and ideas in the "Small Images" show attest to the naturally flexible business of thinking and art-ifying on a deliberately small scale. One of the finest examples in the gallery, possibly deserving this observer's "Best of Show" vote, appears via Julia Ford's acorn drawings. Graced with the subtitles "See No Evil" and "Hear No Evil," these pieces are drawn with a rather startling delicacy and sly anthropomorphizing gestures.

Paintings come from assorted angles, such as the volatility-infused gust of Phoebe Brunner's "Pink Fog," with its beautiful yet foreboding dusty pinkish plume rearing its head over a tilled field. A post-Pop arty buzz can be detected in Frank Krifka's "Eye Candy," a crispy still life study of a lollipop against a sensuous sea green background, while Zacarias Paul and Saul Gray-Hildebrand's "Study of Line Under Dubious Circumstances" is an abstracted, palpable post-painting creation. Its material list includes acrylic, glue, and burnt paint on panel.

Connie Connally shows a pair of small, dim-lit portraits, "Facing 60 - Mike," and "Facing 60 - Shelley," a subtle tip of the art-making process toward the theme of graceful aging.

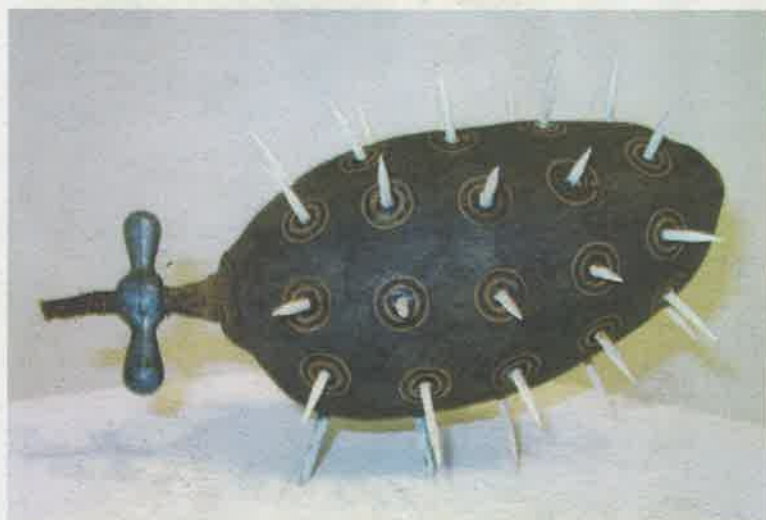
Wit and whimsy bubbles up in some of the three-dimensional art here, as in Cody Lynch's untitled "found object" creation, with shiny and precious-looking railroad stakes on delicate cheesecloth-like fabric. Nicholas Coroneos' "The Conver-

sation" consists of eyeglasses, one attached ear and, true to the "small" condition here, a tiny figure climbing a ladder, as if to whisper advice or corruptive influence into the ear.

For Colleen M. Kelly's "Prickly Puttering Pod," the goofy alliterative title actually neatly conveys the slightly loony, slightly ominous spirit of the mutant art object. Virginia McCracken, an inventive master of the miniature vignette, has often graced this exhibition with her work, as happens again this time around, with "Philosophy Department," its creatures nestled in isolated cubicles.

Some of the more interesting pieces in the show, in fact, lean to the left of conventional media or established artistic means. For instance, "Grape," "Ginkgo" and "Blackberry," Nicole McKee's realistic studies of leaves against plain, grained and unvarnished wood panel cleverly cross-reference notions of nature, as representation and material. Patricia Tierney's effectively collaged piece called "Iowa" manages to evoke the culture and persona of its title, with its tattered-edged view of a Middle American farm.

Art for modernity's sake arrives via Saritha Mardon's "iPad Drawing #405," quite an enchanting and even organic-feeling layered abstraction, especially considering that it was created on a tool based on ones and zeroes. To keep in the spirit of "Small Images," though, shouldn't it have been created on an iPhone? Just wondering.



'Prickly Puttering Pod,' Colleen M. Kelly

SBCC Atkinson Gallery photos

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