

REFUGIUM

CHRISTINA LAUREL

DEC 4, 2020 - MAY 1, 2021

GALLERY A



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CHRISTINA LAUREL

Pictured

Christina Laurel speaking to the TCVA's exhibition team about a model of Gallery A that she built while planning her installation.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Christina Laurel is an artist of paper and in 2005 she removed her art from the frame; in 2009 she began crafting suspensions that freely rotate and in 2014 shoji paper made its debut in an installation featuring one of her nature motifs – the ginkgo. She originally studied fashion design at Cornell University, then fine art at the University of Maryland and SUNY Brockport, earning a BS Studio Art in 2009.

Laurel’s “Refugium” and “Emergent” installations were developed during several artist residencies: 2017, ArtRez, Newnan, GA; 2016, Virginia Center for Creative Arts, Amherst, VA; 2015, Hambidge Center for Creative Arts, Rabun Gap, GA; and 2014, Paducah Arts Alliance, Paducah, KY. She has participated in a multitude of solo, duo and group exhibitions in galleries, museums and venues in South Carolina, North Carolina, New York, Kentucky and Georgia. She now resides in Liberty, South Carolina.





REFUGIUM

A refugium is a specific environment in which a species can survive, whereas outside this environment it cannot. The butterfly is my chosen nature motif for this “Refugium”: strong yet fragile, enduring yet temporal. By walking among the socially-distanced, freely-rotating, suspended cocoons the viewer becomes a part of the installation. When the biodiversity scientist E. O. Wilson brought to my attention that even butterfly species are endangered, the metaphorical leap to our own species was not far. Key to our survival is refuge within an oasis of calm, a counterbalance to the sensory bombardment of our daily lives. “Refugium” is just such an oasis.



EXHIBITION SUMMARY

Christina Laurel is a paper artist creating installations and two-dimensional art, all with a Japanese aesthetic. Her mission is to create an "exhale" moment, an oasis of respite from the sensory bombardment of today's world. Suspended lace panels support a migrating pattern of butterflies that cast shadows and respond to air movement. Perambulating - whether with shoes, walker or wheelchair - through the suspended cocoons of "Refugium," the viewer will become a part of the installation and a part of the art.





Project History and Process

Christina Laurel

“Refugium” began as an exploration of suspended cocoons during my 2014 Artist Residency in Paducah, KY. Other iterations of immersive installations – ginkgo leaf, lily pad – were developed during artist residencies at Hambidge Center for the Arts, 2015; Virginia Center for Creative Arts, 2016; and Newnan, GA’s ArtRez, 2017. A materials support grant from the Metropolitan Arts Council, Greenville, SC, was awarded in 2014. The ginkgo leaf “Refugium” installation premiered at Greenville Technical College’s Riverworks Gallery, Greenville, SC, in 2016, and was revised in 2019 for the City of Greer Center for the Arts, Greer, SC. The lily pad “Emergent” installation premiered at Limestone College, Gaffney, SC, in 2017, and was revised for the Anderson Arts Center, Anderson, SC, in 2019. The butterfly cocoons were exhibited as elements in my solo exhibit in the Metropolitan Art Council gallery, Greenville, SC, in 2017; and in a gallery at a Flat Rock, NC exhibition in 2017. The butterfly “Refugium” installation was exhibited as part of “Paper Worlds” in the Spartanburg Art Museum, Spartanburg, SC, in 2017.

Project History and Process

Christina Laurel

Laurel's work is influenced by her appreciation for a Japanese aesthetic. It begins with a photograph of her 2-D collage of a butterfly wing (2011) for the motif units – the butterflies – which are digitally printed. The fragile rice paper is pretreated in her studio with InkAID, an enhancer for digital printing. The sturdier Shoji paper is made of kozo infused with polymer. In addition to the hundreds of digitally printed butterflies, hundreds of white ones are hand traced. All are then individually hand-cut, hole-punched and attached via scrapbook brads to either a die-cut fabric or lace panels. The fabric provides the “cocoon” that envelops a wreath (metal, wood, or bamboo) armature. The fabric fastens at its seam with clear hand-sewn snaps. The free-rotating cocoons are suspended via monofilament.





Educational Activity

How might you create an installation of your own?

- Choose a space you would like to create an installation in. Is your space loud or quiet? Crowded or empty?
- Consider how you want your installation to make people feel (calm, happy, anxious, etc.)
- Create or use found objects that reflect those ideas. Christina uses a stencil to trace her butterflies onto paper before she cuts them out.
- Think about how you can organize and “install” your objects in a way that contributes to your idea. In Refugium, the butterflies are attached to hanging fabric that gently sways back and forth as you walk through the gallery.
- Spend some time in your installation, and ask others to join you to see what they think!

Christina Laurel

Christina Laurel creates her installations by transforming the gallery into a space where viewers can relax, contemplate their thoughts, and become part of the artwork itself. She uses thousands of softly-colored paper butterflies, clinging to cocoons to create her calming aesthetic spaces. Installations are a form of artwork that create immersive environments and respond to the spaces they occupy.

Learn More!

[Installation Art Definition](#)

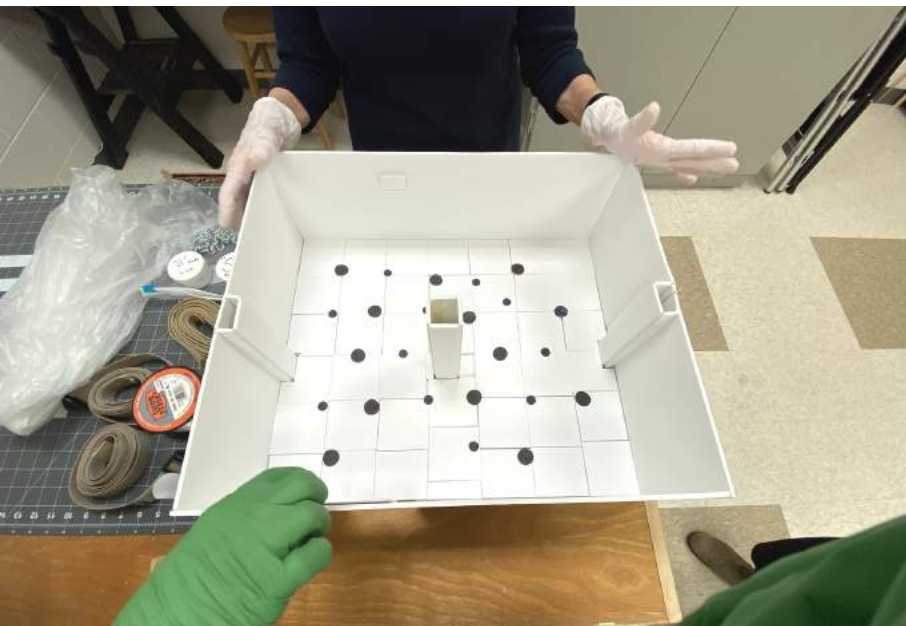
[Installation Art Movement](#)

BEHIND THE SCENES

REFUGIUM: CHRISTINA LAUREL
DEC 2, 2020 - MAY 1, 2021











Walk with us through the gallery...



click [here](#) to join

click [here](#) for additional images



THANK YOU

FROM THE TURCHIN CENTER FOR THE VISUAL ARTS

The Turchin Center for the Visual Arts at Appalachian State University engages visitors from the university, community, nation and beyond in creating unique experiences through dynamic and accessible exhibition, education, outreach and collection programs. These programs inspire and support a lifelong engagement with the visual arts and create opportunities for participants to learn more about themselves and the world around them.

