



Contact:
Jessica Burko, Director of Marketing
Kingston Gallery
450 Harrison Ave, No. 43
Boston, MA 02118
Direct: 617-462-9353
jburko@kingstongallery.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

in the Main and Center Galleries:
Rhonda Smith, *Oh That Beautiful Planet, What Have We Done?*
in the Kingston Project Space
Conny Goelz Schmitt, *Neverending Stories*
June 5–30, 2019
Opening Reception: Friday, June 7, 5–8pm

SOUTH END BOSTON, MA (April 16, 2019) – In her latest exhibition, *Oh That Beautiful Planet, What Have We Done?* Rhonda Smith transforms found materials along with wire mesh dripping with clay, paint, netting, and wood – into sculptures as symbols of urban architecture in conflict with the insistence of nature. The installations are an homage to the beauty and intricacies of natural phenomena and their battle with humankind. The series, *Oh That Beautiful Planet, What Have We Done?* is on view **from June 5th through 30th, with an opening reception on First Friday June 7th from 5–8pm**. Smith’s new work is a departure from her previous focus on painting and allows a multidimensional exploration of forms; the power of her message has never been more strongly felt than in this exhibition.

The show is in two parts. The front room houses individual pieces that comprise a world of re-examined natural forms: an element from the periodic table, satellite views of earth, a map, wormholes and more. The second room holds an installation, a battlefield between humankind and nature. In this exhibition Smith has constructed tilting model skyscrapers between one and four feet in height, containing stairs and ladders that go nowhere. These buildings stand as the human intrusion in the ongoing global destruction of nature. Her skyscrapers mirror towering urban structures that are both amazing feats of human intelligence and also brash evidence of human hubris and the desire to dominate. Looming up behind the imagined city is nature at her reactive best. “We have these elongated boxes in which we cannot easily ascend or descend without assistance. I like the idea of assembling a city but am also disturbed by my own urban surroundings.” With this statement Smith emphasizes the perpetual conflict of human against nature, the adaptive, intelligent and ever evolving force.

As Rhonda Smith developed her sculptures they began to metaphorically speak to one another. She nurtured this relationship structurally and through their positioning until their conversation and correspondence could be viscerally felt, just as a canopy of trees whisper together and share roots. Within her scaffolding for each shape, Smith alters any formalism by bending and distorting the wire. As other materials are attached the forms establish a persona while their basic skeletons can still show through. A seasoned handling of color and the animation of wire and clay make this manipulation possible, and speaks to the source of her ideas which encompass the infinite forms of nature.

This is Rhonda Smith's first solo show as a Member of Kingston Gallery. Previous exhibitions of her work include *Walking on Rock and Water*, a solo show at UMass Amherst Hampden Gallery in 2017; *Schemata*, a two person show at the Chandler Gallery Maud Morgan Arts, Cambridge, MA in 2016; *Fragile Navigation* at Danforth Art Museum, Framingham, MA in 2012; and *Particles and Waves* at Iliad Contemporary, New York, NY in 2012. Her work is in many corporate and private collections. Smith's education includes a BA from St. Lawrence University, Canton, NY and further education at the School of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA, and the Cooperativa Mosaicisti, Ravenna, Italy. She has also been a fellow at the Vermont Studio Center. Rhonda Smith creates her work in the Boston area and also in southern Maine.

On view concurrently in the Kingston Project Space is *Neverending Stories* by Conny Goelz Schmitt. Her geometric collage work channels stories from the vintage books she uses to create her work. The collages, assemblages and sculptures play with deconstruction, reconstruction, and changing dimensionality – often in one piece. Interactive sculptures offer different viewpoints of stories. Small work on vintage book boards invites the viewer to make up their own story and wall objects seemingly tell stories on another level. The work leads to new interpretations of past and present and opens up the viewer's outlook to the future.

An artist-run gallery incorporated in 1982, Kingston Gallery exhibits work of Boston-area contemporary artists. Gallery Artists specialize in a diverse range of media, including painting, photography, sculpture, and installation. Kingston Gallery exhibitions are widely viewed and receive regular attention in both print and online publications including *Art in America*, *Art New England*, *Artscope*, *The Boston Globe*, and *Big Red & Shiny*. Gallery hours are Wednesday-Sunday 12-5 pm and by appointment.

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For press-ready images contact Jessica Burko: 617-462-9353, jburko@kingstongallery.com
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