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# Edith Wharton's 'The Mount' in Lenox provides 'green gallery' for SculptureNow exhibit

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(http://connect.masslive.com/user/curban/index.html) By **Cori Urban** | Special to The Republican

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## LENOX



Tree Pod by Laura Reinhard, copper and stone

Photo by Ann Jon

(http://topics.masslive.com/tag/lenox/index.html)–The Mount

(http://www.edithwharton.org), author Edith Wharton’s early 20th-Century estate, is now serving as a “green gallery” for outdoor sculpture as SculptureNow presents its 17th annual exhibition, Common Ground.

The exhibit includes 25 sculptures made from a variety of materials including steel, aluminum, concrete, wood, bronze, granite, reclaimed construction material, chiseled glass and copper.

They are all for sale and range in price from \$1,000 to \$90,000.

“Each piece is carefully sited to show it to its best advantage and also to draw attention to the natural beauty of the site,” said Ann Jon, director of SculptureNow and an exhibiting sculptor in the show. “Visitors may linger without distractions on the grassy and woody sites.”

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According to **Laura Reinhard** (<http://laurareinhard.com>), a sculptor living in the Florence section of Northampton, “The Mount is an extraordinary setting since it not only has the mere acreage for such a show, but the immaculately tended, rolling and wooded grounds provide each sculpture its individual setting, its nook, so to speak. One can look at each sculpture and forget there are 24 more to see.”

This is a different experience for the viewer than seeing 25 sculptures placed in a field. “One takes a journey...down the road, along the paths, into the woods, discovering each work, with nature's respite between each sculpture to allow for the ‘taking in’ of the artist's intent,” she said.

When she visited The Mount in the heart of winter, she was struck by the soul of the grounds. “There was a moment when I saw a tree branch, and I knew this was the branch where I would hang my sculpture, ‘Tree Pod,’ if it were accepted. To see it there, now, exactly as I envisioned it, is such a thrill,” Reinhard said. “I imagine **Edith Wharton** (<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/bday/0124.html>), a writer and avid gardener, having walked these beautiful grounds, by this tree, maybe, in its nascence, inspired by the growing world, transforming that awe into poetry.”

At The Mount visitors will see, among other sculptures, “Cosmic Inflation” by Henry Richardson, a 5-foot diameter glass globe, sited on top of a rock knoll, that glitters in the sunlight during the day and in the solar light at night. “It appears like the beacon of the show,” Jon said, noting that other sculptures are more subtle, such as Barry Parker’s “Etruscan Traces,” inspired by ancient wall paintings in an Etruscan tomb in Italy. “As you approach this bronze sculpture, you become aware of the fauna and flora shapes within it,” she said.

Gene Montez Flores’ “Eyrie IV” is a meditative, kinetic sculpture. It moves gracefully with the breeze and when the two arms on top meet a sound effect is created. “It is elegant and extremely well crafted,” Jon said.

Artists exhibiting in the show are Taylor Apostol, Peter Barrett, David Boyajian, Jamie Calderwood, William Carlson, Fay Chin, Gene Montez Flores, Mary Annella Frank, Anthony H. Garner, Fritz Horstman, Ann Jon, Nicholas Kantarelis, Elaine Lorenz, Philip Marshall, Lydia Musco, Gary Orlinsky, Barry Parker, Chris Plaisted, Laura Reinhard, Henry Richardson, Susan Ferrari Rowley, Konstantin Simun, Robin Tost, John Wilkinson and Allen Williams.

Every sculptor has a unique drive or quest, and shows like SculptureNow, remind viewers how diverse everyone is. “A sculpture that you see that sticks out in your memory is an invitation to explore what has resonated within you. That combined gift of inspired outward and inward reflection is one of the gifts of sculpture,” Reinhard said.

Her work, often plant-like in form, has a figurative element in its spirit, expressing her deep connection to nature. Having the opportunity to show “Tree Pod” in gardens that were lovingly crafted a hundred years ago is a gift beyond description for her. “Many sculptures are easily at home in concrete urban settings, but my work is meant for intimate garden settings, and The Mount is as good as it gets,” she said.

“This show is probably our best (exhibit) in 17 years. As our reputation has grown we receive very high quality submissions for our jurying, and the word in the art community is ‘this is the show to be in,’” she said.

The show has become a destination point for art collectors and visitors from near and far.

Reinhard sees sculpture as visual poetry, expressive yet succinct--each art form enhanced by the pause between. “This pause, a hallmark of early 20th-Century life is now often considered a moment to saturate our brains with digital information. Maybe an afternoon wandering these grounds begot in another era, can remind us that creativity incubates in the spaces between.”

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SculptureNow has a close relationship with Berkshire County schools that request artist-guided tours of the show and/or hands-on workshops in the schools. The organization offers a monthly artist-guided tour to the general public and also provides self-guiding maps of the show.

There will be free, guided tours at The Mount on Sundays, Aug. 17, Sept. 14 and Oct. 12, of the SculptureNow exhibition which is a juried outdoor show by regional, national and international artists.

Jon will lead the tours, which begin at the stable at 11:30 a.m.

The Mount is located at 2 Plunkett St., Lenox.

The exhibit will be featured at The Mount until Oct. 31.

SculptureNow was founded in 1998 by a group of people involved in the arts in the Berkshire, who saw the need to promote the experience and knowledge of sculpture through exhibitions and educational outreach and to offer artists venues for showing their work in the community.

Its mission includes expanding the knowledge of art in general and sculpture in particular in the Berkshires, through exhibitions, presentations and workshops; offering exhibition opportunities to sculptors and support their careers; providing sculpture-related information and educational materials for use in the schools and colleges in Berkshire County; and participating in the cultural economy of the community.

In past years, SculptureNow has presented works by 16-32 national and international sculptors at such places as the **Berkshire Botanical Garden** (<http://www.berkshirebotanical.org>), the **Norman Rockwell Museum** (<http://www.nrm.org>) and the towns of Stockbridge, Lee, Great Barrington, Housatonic, Lenox, Becket and Hinsdale.

For more information call (413) 623-2068 or visit [www.sculpturennow.org](http://www.sculpturennow.org) (<http://sculpturennow.org>) or [www.edithwharton.org](http://www.edithwharton.org).

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