

# ART NEW ENGLAND

CONTEMPORARY ART AND CULTURE

Factory Direct • The Gates • Dayanita Singh • Dave Gardner  
Books: Hal Foster, Basquiat, Annie Finch • Summer Getaway Guide

JUNE/JULY 2005

\$5.95 US  
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Display until July 31, 2005

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**FEATURES**



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**14** *Rearranging the Furniture: Dayanita Singh at the Gardner*

by Joyce Cohen

Building on Isabella Stewart Gardner's history of connecting artists, musicians, writers, and scholars, the exhibition *Chairs* was created by a team of artists and curators. Dayanita Singh's photographs are at the esthetic epicenter of this ambitious, theatrical project in which the historic and the contemporary share the museum stage.

**16** *Deceits and Fantasies: Contemporary Photography and the Garden*

by Ric Kasim Kadour and Donald Rosenthal

The Middlebury Museum of Art debuts *Deceits and Fantasies*, an exhibition that includes photographs by sixteen artists, including Sally Apfelbaum, Catherine Opie, and Jack Pierson, who make the garden their subject. Produced by the American Federation of the Arts, the exhibit will travel through spring 2006.

**18** *Sentimental Journey: Time and Memory in Pink and Gray*

by Susan Boulanger

*Pretty Sweet: The Sentimental Image in Contemporary Art* at the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park offers bewildering conflicts of past and present, attraction and repulsion, accident and choice, nostalgia and trend. More than one hundred works by thirty-three New England artists attest to the current intellectual, moral, and emotional veracity of the sentimental image.

**21** *Factory Direct: Collaborations in Art and Industry*

by D'lynn Plummer

Two worlds collide at ArtSpace, New Haven, as mass production meets one-of-a-kind in *Factory Direct*. Convinced of the untapped link between arts and industry, both of which require ingenuity, a concern with craft, and a penchant for problem solving, curator Denise Markomish turned twelve artists loose in local factories.

**COLUMNS**



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**3** Of Note Compiled by Barbara O'Brien

**5** Poetry: by Dave Gardner

**6** Books: *Basquiat* Marc Mayer, Ed. Reviewed by Mariana Mogilevich

*The Body of Poetry: Essays on Women, Form and the Poetic Self* by Annie Finch

Reviewed by Mark Lamoureaux

*Prosthetic Gods* by Hal Foster Reviewed by James Fontano

**9** In the Studio: Siona Benjamin by L. P. Streitfeld

L.P. Streitfeld talks with Benjamin as she prepares for *Fereshteh* ("angels"), an exhibit of her paintings at the New Britain Museum of American Art. Benjamin's career has been devoted to marrying the contemporary with the ancient while not being limited by cultural, geographic, or esthetic borders.

**10** Report from New York: The Gates by Christo and Jeanne-Claude

The Ephemeral Monumentalized by Donald Kuspit

This already mythic work of art, in the "planning stage" since 1979, became an occasion for the City of New York to unite. Kuspit asks why the *Gates* became such a festive social event and the answer may be Central Park itself, a kind of Eden in the asphalt jungle.

**26** Spotlight Reviews

**29** Regional Reviews



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*On the cover* Angela Strassheim, *United States Surgical I*, giclee print, 2004 Hundreds of machines braid absorbable sutures in the PDBMF (Polymer Development Braided Manufacturing Facility) page 22

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... and understatement Kieran Reddy exposes the continuing nostalgia for  
empire. *Caroline Bagenal*

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Carney Gallery at Regis College/Weston, MA [www.regiscollege.edu](http://www.regiscollege.edu)

### **CHRISTINE ARVEIL: WEIGHT OF LIGHT**

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As Walter Pater said, "All art aspires to the condition of music," and Christine Arveil's paintings exemplify this idea. She combines violin varnish and pigments on wood to create haunting, expressive works, mainly abstract in organization, suggestive of themes and unheard melodies.

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The theme of art and music is introduced in the first painting on view, *The Young Violinist* (2001), in which a small white figure holds a violin against an abstract background that resembles a stage. *One Cannot Sleep Quietly*, a predominantly red painting, has a standing figure above what appears to be a tombstone, perhaps a memorial of a loved one or a commentary on the fearful state of the world.



Christine Arveil, *Vieillard (The Old Man)*, violin varnishes over gesso on wood, 28 x 20", 2001.

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In an abstract work such as *Fate* (2003) the artist captures a sense of dramatic movement, almost a crescendo or menacing leitmotif. Some of the configurations are more benign, as in a figure with open arms in *I'll Be There For You*, but generally the tone is darker, as in the elements of *The Price of Freedom*. In this work the blood-red swirling mass seems to mirror warfare, wounds, and death.

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One of the most interesting pieces is a double folding screen of six panels, decorated on both sides with varnish, pigments, and gold and silver leaf. On one side the figures of two cranes and marsh plants in gold are silhouetted against a green-black background, possibly referring to noes, or the night. On the other side there is a complete change of mood with a water lily pond against a light green background. It comes as no surprise that Arveil studied Chinese calligraphy and also the painting and varnish techniques of the Argentinean artist Luis Ansa. Here East meets West in diverse yet elegant manifestations. *Alicia Faxon*