

Looking into the play of light

By Cate McQuaid
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

BETH GALSTON:
Luminous Garden (Aerial)
LOREY BONANTE:
flights of fancy

At: Boston Sculptors Gallery,
486 Harrison Ave., through
May 24. 617-482-7781,
www.bostonsculptors.com

Getting ethereal

Sculptor Beth Galston has spent years working with light, and in recent years she's been building gardens out of it. "Luminous Garden (Aerial)" at Boston Sculptors Gallery is the sixth "Luminous Garden" environment and the most ethereal of the ones I have seen. Her father, a scientist who researched the interaction of plants and light, has influenced her work; both of her parents died in recent months, and Galston dedicates this lovely, ethereal piece to them.

She sets tiny amber lights in cast-resin acorn caps, which hover over and amid tangles of delicate wire in a darkened room. Each little cluster of acorn buds seems to defy gravity; this looks more like a gathering of fairies than a garden. The colored wires seem to buoy the lights. The red wires reflect them, so as you wander about the installation, threads of rosy red dash around within it, quick as lightning. All the blossoms of light appear to spring from this tangle of wires, suggesting a reassuring interconnectedness.

Also at Boston Sculptors Gallery, Lorey Bonante's "flights of fancy" show fits neatly with Galston's. Bonante builds critters out of found objects; she coats each in beeswax, which gives it the feeling of an artifact trapped in amber.

There's a wall full of butterflies crafted from old quilts, a creepy but delightful box full of worms made from rolls of ribbons, and a compact stuffed with pompoms, some affixed with tiny eyes. The marriage of domestic and wild is understated but necessary; this artist manages to avoid the saccharine with her sly edge of weirdness.

