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## *Art Made From Light, Bullets At Mattatuck*

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Four new exhibits -- art made from light, art made from bullets, photography and new acquisitions -- are on the walls now at the Mattatuck Museum in Waterbury.

Federico Uribe makes art out of spent bullets. Beth Galston makes art out of darkness and light. Their exhibits, just footsteps away from each other at the Mattatuck Museum in Waterbury, are a demonstration of contrasts and influences.

Galston's "Luminous Garden," in the first-floor ArtLab, was inspired by a trip Galston took to the Galápagos Islands. She was swimming underwater and felt apart from the real world, with no walls or floors. She sought to re-create that otherworldly, floaty feeling with her art.

A tangled jumble of delicate silver and copper wires are suspended from the ceiling in the darkened gallery. As the wires fall and criss-cross each other, they gather in clumps on the floor. At the top of the wires, Galston has created clusters of blossoms made out of clear plastic resin molded from acorn caps. Each blossom holds a tiny light, which glows against the wire and floats in the gallery, like a flower bush suspended in space.

Uribe's inspiration was far from the peaceful depths of the ocean. The Colombian artist, who has lived in Miami for 15 years, is commenting on gun violence both in his native country and his adopted homeland. Uribe uses bullets in various sizes to create a mosaic of flowers, as well as trees, a sunburst, a blue sky, mountains. Repurposing the tools of death, he creates a scene full of life. Uribe's bullet-mosaic hangs in the lobby beside another creation made by bullets and full of life: an adorable golden squirrel, scampering up the wall.

A more traditional art medium, photography, fills the Munger Room next to the Uribe installation. The exhibit of black-and-white prints from the collection of Kevin McNamara and Craig Nowak is dominated by vulnerable images of children by Sally Mann and Jock Sturges. Still, the most powerful piece in the show "Black & White" is Kim Scianghetti's lovely "The Citadel," a close-up of a pair of strong adult hands encircling a tiny child's hand.

On the third floor, an exhibit called "First Look" celebrates the five years since Bob Burns took over as director of the Mattatuck by showing off works that have come into — or have been promised to — the museum's collection since he arrived. Curator Cynthia Roznoy said upon his arrival, Burns shifted the museum's focus from history to art. "He concentrated on contemporary work, work by women, work by diverse artists, fine art photography. We had nothing but archival photography, historic photography," Roznoy said.

Burns called Waterbury "The City of Countries," reflecting its diverse demographic makeup, and said that thought inspired his focus on artists from all races and nationalities. "I want to make people feel welcomed," he said. He used as an example photography by Berenice

Abbott, one of a well-dressed black man, one of a Lebanese restaurant. "You see that and you feel comfortable here," he said.

Other works in the "First Look" exhibit include pieces by Jasper Johns, Ivan Olinsky, Kate O'Donovan Cook, Faith Ringgold, Lyle Owerko, Dorothy Ochtman, Ellen Carey, Robert Berlind and an array of promised works from the collection of Barbara Spargo of Old Saybrook, whose collection focuses on the Ashcan school and other works of realism.

History is still a presence, however. One vintage piece in the show is a record of prisoners admitted to Waterbury's city alms house, beginning in 1881 and ending in 1961, for charges ranging from vagrancy, drunkenness and "being a common prostitute."

***LUMINOUS GARDEN, QUEDAMOS EN PAZ #3 and BLACK & WHITE*** will be at the Mattatuck Museum, 144 W. Main St. in Waterbury, until July 16. "First Look / New to the Collection" will be up until May 14. [mattatuckmuseum.org](http://mattatuckmuseum.org).