

Still/Life: Acts of Collection, Preservation and Transformation

Beth Galston, Artist

1998, Boston Sculptors at Chapel Gallery, West Newton, MA

Materials: Leaves, seed pods, urethane resin, silicone rubber

Dimensions: variable

Still/Life, an installation of sculptures cast in translucent plastic resin, merges my earlier interests in light and architecture with recent explorations of natural forms and phenomena. I collected leaves, acorns, branches, logs and seed pods, and preserved them by making castings of their shapes or embedding them in translucent resin, like insects in amber. The installation finds beauty in nature and the manmade world, creating a new hybrid form. The capturing of these elements in resin so that they cannot grow and or die, leads to meditations on decay, permanence, and the passage of time.

While some of the forms are architectural (a wall of resin "bricks" with green ginkgo leaves embedded), others are made by casting a log or seedpod directly, transforming its shape into a crystalline object. The cast elements, whether the size of real bricks in *Ginkgo Wall* or the tiny cubes in *Acorn Cubes*, can be stacked and rearranged in a variety of configurations. The installation explores ways in which the act of preserving, much like the act of remembering, transforms the physical world.