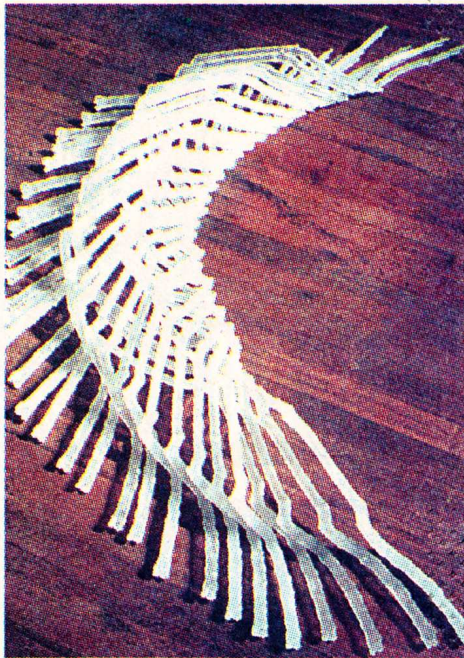


G4



"Bone," of white resin, ripples like a rib cage or a spine.

## There's still life in Galston's well-resined art

By Christine Temin  
GLOBE STAFF

The log is translucent, the color of amber, and trapped inside it are large, ruffly sycamore leaves. The natural cycle that

### Perspectives

would inevitably lead to their death has been halted by artist

Beth Galston, who has preserved the leaves in resin, one of the main materials in her show at Boston Sculptors at Chapel Gallery. Leaves that are the outgrowth of a tree are here encased in the very form that gave them birth, like a human traveling back into the womb.

Galston is best known for architectural installations that explore light — gauzy mazes or columns of scrim. Resin also allows light through; that's one of the properties that have made it extremely popular among contemporary sculptors including Rachel Whiteread, whose resin casts of the undersides of chairs look like Jell-O molds

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Beth Galston's "Wall Fragment" is resin bricks with ginkgo leaves preserved within, the natural process of their decay thwarted.

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in previously undreamt-of flavors.

While Galston has become smitten with nature and developed into a committed collector of acorns, leaves, branches, and seed pods, a strong affinity for geometric order still informs her work. Her "Wall Fragment" is a case in point, a stepped corner of resin bricks with ginkgo leaves preserved within, the natural process of their decay thwarted.

She revels in revealing her process, so she exhibits the rubber molds she uses to cast, and transform, acorns or branches. "Bone Birth" is a mold of a tree branch; Galston presents the mold with the branch lying inside, to give you a show-and-tell about the origins of the final product, "Bone." A two-part floor sculpture made of white resin casts that ripple like a rib cage or spine, the piece has indeed become more bone than branch. It's also a lyrical, harmonious form.

In "Game Board" a grid of pale resin acorn casts hovers several feet above real

acorns lined up neatly on the floor, like a ghost communicating with its mortal shell. The resin acorns hang by almost invisible monofilament, which also allows the helix of pods in "Twirl" to look like they're pirouetting in midair.

Mighty oaks will never grow from Galston's little acorns. She's got other plans for them, including using them to make pink and green molds that look like children's blocks or classical architectural decoration. Like a botanist, her first move is to impose Euclidean order on nature. While these works aren't large, they charge the big Chapel Gallery space, speaking to each other across it, even serving to remind you that the gallery itself is built of the end product of acorns whose life cycle has *not* been interrupted by an artist.

"Beth Galston: Still/Life" is at Boston Sculptors at Chapel Gallery, 60 Highland St., West Newton, through Oct. 18. Hours are Wednesday to Sunday, 1-5:30. Galston speaks about her work in the gallery Sunday at 11:15.