

Artists make something out of nothing at Cultural Council show

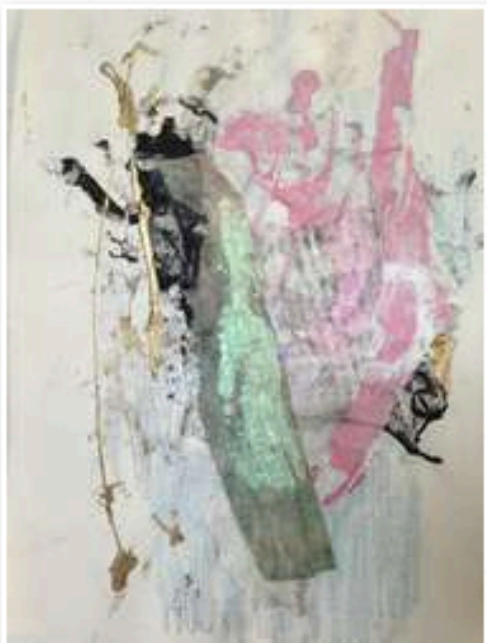
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1



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Nellie Lou Slagle's mixed media *Small Talk* is among several pieces by the seasonal resident in *Something Out of Nothing* at the Cultural Council of Palm Beach County. Courtesy of the artist

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"Orange Mesh Fence Trees 1" is an inkjet print by Rod Faulds featured in *Something Out of Nothing* at the Cultural Council of Palm Beach County. Courtesy of Rod Faulds

By Jan Sjoström

Daily News Arts Editor

For seasonal resident [Nellie Lou Slagle](#), it begins with a blank piece of paper and acrylic paint. For Stephen Futej, the starting point could be an old recycling bin or a discarded television antenna.

But before that, there's an idea. It's nothing you can see. Essentially, creating art is making "Something Out of Nothing," which is the idea behind and the title of the exhibition at the [Cultural Council of Palm Beach County](#) in Lake Worth.

The show features 15 Palm Beach County artists and 56 works in a variety of media. All the work has never been exhibited before or was created for the show.

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Slagle's family have kept an apartment in Palm Beach since 1969. A Pittsburgh native, she studied art at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, N.Y., in the 1950s. On weekends she toured the galleries, taking in the latest works of abstract expressionists such as Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning.

"Abstract art was coming into its own, and I rode the wave," Slagle said. "It spoke to me."

When she's in Palm Beach, she rents a studio at the [Armory Art Center](#) and studies advanced painting with Miroslav Antic.

Her exuberant, colorful abstract paintings balance vigorous mark-making with generous white space. She uses multiple media, including collage, charcoal, ink, pencil, acrylic and iridescent paint.

"I'm fascinated with light," she said. "Being in Palm Beach, I'm highly influenced by the light and the colors."

'Reconfiguration'

Futej, a Lake Worth resident, is a ceramicist who transitioned into making sculpture from found objects when he lost access to a ceramics studio. His two pieces in the show — "Gorjeta" and "Are We Reaching" — were made for the exhibition.

"I'm interested in the concept of decay and reconfiguration," he said.

The long, slender backbone of "Are We Reaching," a dancery assemblage made up of junk, is a discarded television antenna he scavenged from a house on his street. A satellite dish, saw blade and slices of the recycling bin balance on the frame of a disassembled cement mixer.

[Vanessa Diaz](#), a 2014 South Florida Cultural Consortium winner, used window coverings and a slice of plastic fencing to construct the site-specific "How Slight a Shelter is Necessary," which clings like a spider web to the wall high above the gallery floor.

Rod Faulds, director of the [University Galleries](#) at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, constructed rhythmic, gridlike abstract prints using multiple small photographs of mundane subjects, such as mesh fencing and roadway striping.

[Mumbi O'Brien](#), another South Florida Cultural Consortium winner, and Ates Isildak contributed the video "Pink's Rebellion," in which a hairy, all-pink character who looks like a relative of artist Nick Cave's soundsuits, has a strange adventure.

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