



Art and about - Shifting Considerations at CR10

by John Isaacs



Shifting Considerations: Francine Hunter McGivern and Daniel Rothbart Retrospective Installations, photo credit: Alon Koppel..

A number of great husband-and-wife artists spring to mind: Christo and Jean-Claude, and the just late Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, as collaborators; Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, Max Ernst and Dorothea Tanning, Lee Krasner and Jackson Pollock, working independently of each other. Then there's Francine Hunter McGivern and Daniel Rothbart in our backyard, mutually supportive creators of wildly inventive art.

CR10 (on County Route 10) is an ingeniously restored former agricultural facility that now supplies two vast, open but mysterious spaces, periodically showcasing eminent, often locally-based contemporary artists ... including, currently, in their joint installation *Shifting Considerations*, Francine and Daniel themselves. The former has been a formidable fixture on New York's downtown art scene for decades, a pioneer in both performance and Fluxus-based conceptualism; the latter too honed his cultural acuity (as both writer and multi-faceted artist) in New York, but equally significantly in Naples,



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Italy (his delicious 2018 book *Seeing Naples* is a paean to that glorious city and its profound contribution to Western culture for two thousand years).

McGivern's voluminous work is surveyed on the ground floor of CR10 across an enticing maze of walls delineating the various periods of her continuously streaming output, including – dare I mention – a series of panels created with her own menses. But that is only one of numerous dazzlingly self-reflective series that by turn anticipate Cindy Sherman's pithy pseudo-portraits (perhaps even more effectively) and proceed to delve into recent intricate riffs on the peculiarities of visual awareness, in abstract compositions driven by mirrors and symbolism.

Rothbart's own very peculiar but sensuous sculptures, arrayed across the upper floor, are meticulously engineered other-worldly constructions that manage to be both weird yet curiously friendly, just as we hope any future visitors will be. I would however mention that missing from this retrospective are the artist's ingenious superimpositions of those structures in even more surrealist graphic compositions, which would have further enriched our appreciation of his oeuvre.

Both artists combine fertile imagination with a deep mystical awareness: that our perception and experience of the world is necessarily constrained, and that what we see is far from all there is. As their art hints at infinite possibilities, it provides numerous perspectives on nature that otherwise elude us. "Shifting Considerations" is a rare marriage of mind-bending multi-dimensionality and cool, clear, conscious control.

Through August 17, 2022, Saturdays 12–5 pm, Friday by appointment.