

Human Nature Walk: Aurora Robson

Brattleboro Museum and Art Center, Brattleboro, VT • brattleboromuseum.org • Through February 11, 2024

The entire Wolf Kahn and Emily Mason Gallery is given over to Aurora Robson's installations that compose *Human Nature Walk*. *Troika*, three-pointed, eight-foot tall spires, are the focal point of the left hand portion of the space. Comprised of built up rings of high density polyethylene in varying shades of blue, the forms undulate upwards as if in a joyful dance. The piece was created in partnership with the Palmer Museum and Arboretum at Penn State University in 2017, and has been exhibited widely ever since.

Extending her reach, the artist invites viewers to contribute bottle caps to her collection. She colors and integrates them into sculptures. *Troika* is surrounded by smaller compositions that hang from the ceiling; they are affixed to the walls, or rise from the floor. *Fermi* is delicately constructed plastic debris (PET) tinted with polyacrylic and mica powder and held together with aluminum crimping beads. The modulations of transparent elements, reaching tendrils and flowerlike forms are incessantly fascinating.



Installation view of Aurora Robson's *Troika* (2017) and cap pools (2023) in the foreground, *Isla* (2014) and *Ona* (2014) on the floor at left, *Cassandra* (2023) suspended from ceiling. Courtesy of Marshall Coles.

The raised stage area is filled with white and transparent complex sculptures with titles like *Blooby*, *Be like Water*, *Catkin*, *Dance Don't Run*, which are made of 3-D printed, hand cut and tinted plastic debris. Suspended from the skylight, lit both from above and behind by natural light, this is a magical offering that is like entering an enchanted land where, at any moment, the elements might begin to move and come alive.

Robson's whole purpose is to support life. By taking plastic out of the waste stream and making its longevity an asset as an art piece, she is hoping to be engaged in practices that serve life rather than destroy it. She sees her practice also as a "love poem" dedicated to the intersection of nature and culture with the aim of softening the edges between."

Human Nature Walk is a stunning exhibit that invites us into the multi-layered world of Robson's artistic imagination and social consciousness in a very successful integration of the two. It is most definitely worth a trip to the Brattleboro Museum and Art Center, itself a pioneering institution dedicated to presenting unique and meaningful work. — *B. Amore*