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# River Arts gets wild with latest exhibition

The Damariscotta gallery is showing 'Wild Things' through May 22.

BY BOB KEYES STAFF WRITER



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"Scuttling the Shore" by Jean Kigel is on view at River Arts in Damariscotta. *Courtesy of River Arts*

More than 100 Maine artists submitted artwork for consideration in the juried exhibition "Wild Things" at River Arts in Damariscotta. Ultimately, juror Jorge Arango chose work by 78 of them. Arango is the art critic for the Maine Sunday Telegram.

The exhibition is on view through May 22 at River Arts, 36 Elm St., Damariscotta. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

"The word 'wild' can mean so many things, so I interpreted it liberally," Arango wrote in an email. "Wild in this show can simply refer to untamed nature, eye-popping color, enigmatic iconography and meanings that don't fit a neatly conventional rationale,

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energy-charged gesture, untrammelled emotion, or the insurgent lightness and freedom of whimsy.”



Juror Jorge Arango described "Understory" by Sherri Hume as "a realist tangle of branches." *Courtesy of River Arts*



He called attention to Sherri Hume's realist tangle of branches, Jean Kigel's Asian brush watercolors of wild geese and plovers on a beach, and Chesley Ferrell's magenta-

tinged tree, “where nature seems even more uncontrollable than normal.”

Roben Voigt’s whimsical mixed-media figures evoke magical forest spirits, and the abstractions of Alice de Mauriac and Marli Thibodaut are full of emotional gesture, he said. Paintings by Sally Stanton, Kevin Xiques and David Pontbriand “feel appropriate because of their eye-popping palettes. But the iconography and meaning of Xiques and Pontbriand also seem elusive to any neat, conventional rationale. There’s something wild at their heart, even if we cannot discern it.”

River Arts, which is currently operating with volunteers, moved from its previous location on Route 1 to the downtown area last July. Renovations involved raising the ceiling, installing drywall over existing cinderblock walls, and putting down a new floor. Participation has doubled since the move, said de Mauriac, the organization’s volunteer board president. “We love the downtown location and so do the artists,” she said.

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