



Visual Diary: Ruby Jackson “TAKEOVER!” at Southampton Arts Center

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by Pat Rogers

It's difficult to know where to look first when visiting Ruby Jackson's temporary studio at the Southampton Arts Center (SAC) in Southampton Village, NY. She set up camp near the entrance of the cavernous gallery space so it's impossible to miss it.

Look up and there's plenty to see dangling: glittery pieces of twisty turning forms feel like whimsy ready for a gentle breeze. Meanwhile, her version of a picnic waits nearby. Tucked beneath a clear protective covering are tiny plates of food created from polymer clay in minute detail.



Mini food sculptures by Ruby Jackson, part of Southampton Arts Center's "TAKEOVER! Artists in Residence" in Southampton, NY. Photo by Pat Rogers.



Detail of food sculptures in polymer clay by Ruby Jackson, part of Southampton Arts Center's "TAKEOVER! Artists in Residence" in Southampton, NY. Photo by Pat Rogers.

For her time at SAC, Jackson wanted to give visitors a taste of what it would be like if they actually visited her Hamptons studio. There is plenty of art in process with an equal amount of completed art ready to be enjoyed with a gaze.

These days, Jackson is focuses on art that is lighthearted and brings joy to the world. "Life is short," she said. "At this point, I want to make work that makes me happy and may bring happiness to others."

The art suspended on strings is a perfect example. Made from colorful contortions of colored glue, each pieces dries into unexpected shapes and then is combined in intriguing ways, Jackson explained. Surprising, the suspended art is designed to be viewed from the bottom up to mimic the sensation of swimming underwater and gazing upward or perhaps lying on the grass and looking at clouds hovering in blue sky. The colorful hammock helps encourage this discovery and adds another fun touch to her artist studio.



Ruby Jackson at Southampton Art Center's "TAKEOVER! Artists in Residency" in Southampton, NY. Photo by Pat Rogers.

There is a serious side to her suspended artworks. Forms in white are meant to represent coral that has died and becomes stripped of its color. Still beautiful, the contrast is a subtle reminder of the way dark moments are infused with light ones. The series continues her interest in the beauty found in the sea and the richness of underwater life she experienced while snorkeling in the Caribbean, Belize, Jamaica and other locales.

During her residency at SAC, Jackson has focused on making new forms from glue that is both colorful and whimsical which is easy for visitors to enjoy. It also allows a way into her art process, developed after her accidental discovery that dried glue creates interesting free form shapes that gave rise to creating interesting forms and combinations in her art.

Her airy sculptures of glue are paired with series and art selections from her past. Installed on the wall are collages made from colorful rolled paper. Nearby, is a display of miniature sculptures made from polymer clay.



Paper sculptures by Ruby Jackson, part of Southampton Arts Center's "TAKEOVER! Artists in Residency" in Southampton, NY. Photo by Pat Rogers.

Jackson reached back into her own art history to present *White Tower*, a white sculpture that was formally installed in the window of Tiffany's in New York City during her early days as an artist. The retail space was a revered one as it was a competitive showcase for selected emerging artists. In turn, the exhibition space featured art by Andy Warhol, Jasper Johns and Rauschenberg, Jackson said.

Viewing the intriguing shapes of *White Tower*, it's easy to see Jackson's continual commitment to form and the way she pushes materials to their limits as part of her art practice.



"White Tower" by Ruby Jackson is on view in Southampton Arts Center's exhibition "TAKEOVER! Artists in Residence" in Southampton, NY.

In addition to her art and process, there's plenty of laughter to be had during a visit with Jackson. Among the intriguing art, Jackson is quick to offer easy conversation, allowing visitors can gain a studied look into her art making practice: one that spans decades.



Artist Ruby Jackson chats with visitors during open hours at Southampton Arts Center's "TAKEOVER! Artists in Residence" in Southampton, NY. Photo by Pat Rogers.



A suspended sculpture by Ruby Jackson, apart of Southampton Arts

Center's "TAKEOVER! Artists in Residence" in Southampton, NY.
Photo by Pat Rogers.



Ruby Jackson Discusses her art on view in Southampton Arts Center's "TAKEOVER! Artists in Residency" in Southampton, NY.
Photo by Pat Rogers.

BASIC FACTS: "TAKEOVER! Artists in Residence" is on view February 9 to April 14, 2019 at the Southampton Arts Center, 25 Jobs Lane, Southampton, NY 11968. Click here to discover more about the exhibition.

To see more art by Ruby Jackson, click [here](#).

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