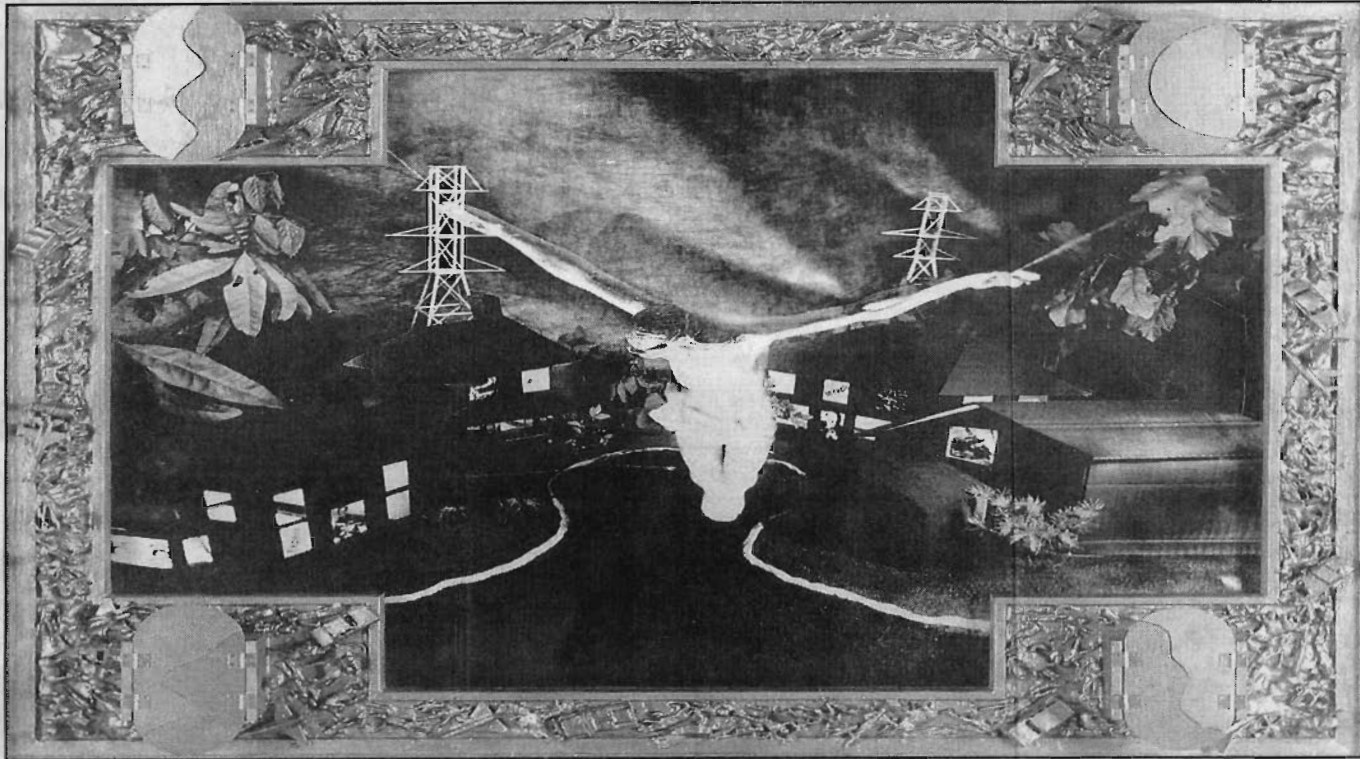


## ART



Mark Williamson received the \$250 trustee's award for his photograph titled "Lupa's Easter Dream."

# Show focuses on fewer artists

BY VIRGINIA VAN HORN  
SPECIAL TO THE DAILY BREAK

**B**ERNICE STEINBAUM, director of the Steinbaum Krauss Gallery in New York, looks for the magic in art. As juror of the 1994 Peninsula Fine Arts Center Juried Exhibition, she selected the 111 works (out of 905) that for her cast the strongest spells.

## REVIEW

This show is small compared to past exhibitions. In many cases, Steinbaum chose three works by a single artist to provide a more comprehensive view of each participant.

While last year's show had an environmental theme, this one returns to the unrestricted shows of previous years. However, the interest in nature remains. Images of the natural world and its subjects, shapes and substances occupy a significant portion of the exhibit.

The land continues to be a powerful presence, particularly in Barbara Southworth's beautiful and unsettling photographs of fields in bloom. Biomorphic form also is strong, especially in sculpture. The influence of nationally known abstract sculptor Martin Puryear also seems present in many works. The laminated wooden "Podform" by Springfield artist Nancy Sansom Reynolds suggests a giant chrysalis for some sprouting animal or vegetable, bursting with life from its lovingly polished body to its

## ON EXHIBIT

**What:** "Juried Exhibition 1994"

**Where:** Peninsula Fine Arts Center, 101 Museum Dr., Newport News

**When:** through Nov. 13

**Hours:** Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, 1 to 5 p.m.

**How much:** free

**Call:** 596-8175

### Winners

The top winner was Jenni Lukac of Richmond, who won the \$1,000 friends award and the \$750 award of honor. Seven Southside Hampton Roads artists also won awards — Chris Ferebee, Suzette McKinney and Peyton Campbell of Virginia Beach, and Edna Lazaron, Mark Williamson, Anne Bousquet and Ruth Scarlott of Norfolk.

quirky, curved tail.

Pods also appear in "Hook of the Anaconda," the chairman's award winner by Wendy Ross. In "Hook," a rope-covered cone with a rope leash leads to a hairy cocoon whose mouth swallows up the rope's bulbous end. Ross' use of fiber is reminiscent of Polish artist Magdalena Abakanowicz.

The exhibition displays a heightened sensitivity to surfaces, from

the luxurious gleam of Emilio Santini's glass "Fertility Goblet" to the charred remains of Jackie Wall's totemic "Hybrids" and Suzette McKinney's ruined houses. It's curious to see this attention to materials and texture, given that the show was selected from slides, not from original work.

There is jewelry fit for Rapunzel and Nefertiti by Mary Beth Nixon and Damita Jo Nicholson. Nixon's ethereal and deadly "Thorn Neckpiece" and "Thorn Cuff" could adorn the heroine of a fairy tale. Where Nixon uses fine silver and gold, Nicholson uses the humble safety pin — 800 of them to create her royal "Beaded Breast Plate Necklace."

If Nicholson reinvents the decorative arts of ancient Egypt, then Judith Leemann evokes its animal-headed deities in "Untitled (Test Tubes)." Here, five wooden racks of test tubes hang on the wall, supported by copper strips. The vials are filled with sinister, repulsive-but-interesting sediment and topped with a variety of wax figures: human, animal and floral. These graceful, grotesque creatures guard the murky secrets of procreation.

Like alchemy, Leemann's sculpture combines the scientific with the spiritual in an experiment to uncover the elusive mysteries of life.

Separated from "Untitled" by the width of a wall is a work that celebrates the bits and pieces of every-

day life. "38th Street," a triptych by Norfolk artist Anne Bousquet and winner of the representational painting award, is a representation of reality in kaleidoscopic fragments, where the supernatural exists equally with the mundane.

Starring Bousquet's Dalmatian in a meditative pose, it is a witty, exuberant painting reminiscent of a more domestic, less hermetic Jasper Johns.

Bousquet's everything-but-the-kitchen-sink approach could also apply to the recent installations by Ron Snapp, associate professor of art at Old Dominion University, whose "Exit 2" fills a tiny gallery. Technology runs rampant: Pipes, gauges and copper wire spring from a central ladder like mechanized kudzu, accompanied by a collection of warning devices, sirens and alarms.

A Donald Duck night light and an exit sign light the way — are they beacons of hilarity and hope, or ironic indications of some more terminal departure?

A more poetic group of commonplace objects is arranged in Charles Ritchie's exquisite small drawings. Ordinary items — a vase of flowers, a chair piled with books — suddenly seem unbearably poignant. In "Daffodils with Astronomical Chart," Ritchie joins the familiar with the infinite. Like William Blake, he can "see the world in a grain of sand and heaven in a wild flower."