



In the Galleries - NEW: Joan Hall: Marginal Waters

By Jessica Baran
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When it comes to works on paper, Washington University professor Joan Hall is a kind of alchemist. Liberated from any conventional notion of printmaking and handmade paper, Hall's work is immersive and sculptural, if not altogether illusionistic in its ability to mimic other materials. A self-described competitive sailor and environmental activist, here she sets her focus on the ocean and the environmental crisis. In the entry to the gallery, an ocean bed is evoked via a dark-tiled platform on which viewers may walk and inspect the sculptural objects strewn across it. Distressed ropes encased in paper skins, rusted metal cages, a piece of salt-smoothed driftwood — all look like the rough-hewn treasures of disaster. In the main space, a series of large, wall-hung works gather like trash islands on an ocean surface; they're composed of faux nets printed on Mylar or handmade paper in which shells and assorted debris amass and intertwine in porous and ultimately abstract heaps. In the third and last gallery, two series of two-dimensional works hang in metal shadow boxes, representing two sites on the Gulf shore that were especially ravaged by the BP oil spill. Hall created these works on-site, making "prints" on handmade paper using the blackened sand, washed-up refuse and other physical evidence of natural devastation. As with the other works on view, these inspire a weird inner conflict in which one finds unconscionable acts against nature mesmerizingly beautiful, enchanting for their apocalyptic truths. Through October 13 at Bruno David Gallery, 3721 Washington Boulevard; 314-531-3030 or www.brunodavidgallery.com. Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Wed.-Sat. and by appointment.



Photos: Joan Hall at Bruno David Gallery
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ABOUT THE BRUNO DAVID GALLERY

Founded in 2005, the Bruno David specializes in contemporary art, and has been a leading art gallery in Saint Louis. Bruno David represents some of the best artists that St. Louis offers, along with artists of national and international reputation. Located in a renovated industrial building in Midtown St. Louis, Grand Center arts district, the Gallery is directly opposite the Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts and the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM), and is in close proximity to the Sheldon Art Galleries, The Fox Theatre, and Powell Symphony Hall. Bruno David Gallery's art program introduces new contemporary art to local gallery visitors, and is discussed in publications including, *Art in America*, *Art Papers*, *ArtNet Magazine*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. More information about the gallery can be found at brunodavidgallery.com.