

Artists' imaginations take them to far-off lands

Saratoga Arts Center features make-believe environments

By Amy Griffin Updated 5:04 pm EDT, Thursday, May 8, 2014

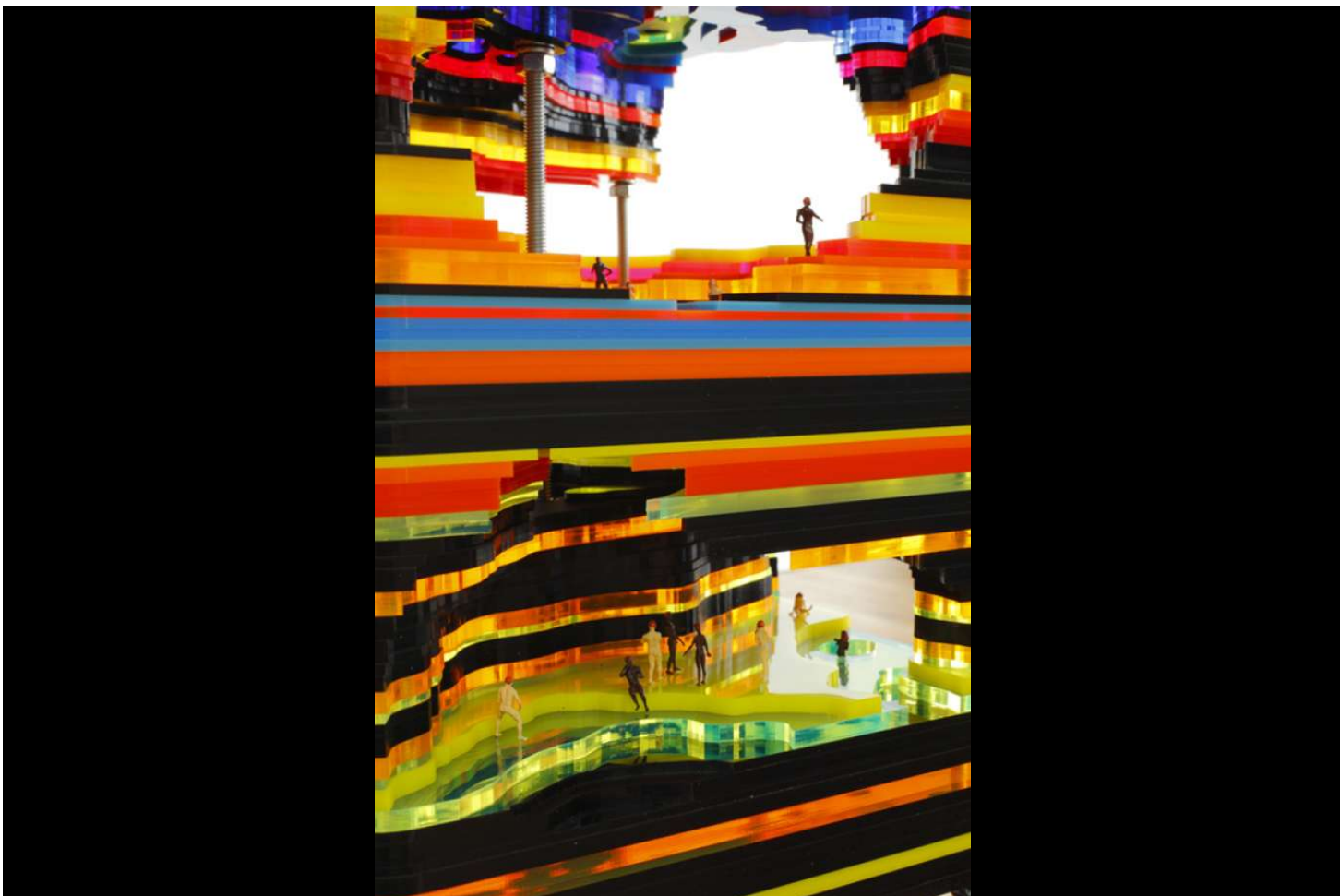


IMAGE 1 OF 3

Susan's Meyer's "Vinyl"

Worlds collide and places that don't exist are explored in the current show at [Saratoga Arts Center](#). "Imaginary Worlds" brings together the work of [Dara Alter](#), [Siobhan McBride](#) and [Kristina Paabus](#), artists from outside the region, and Hudson-based [Susan Meyer](#), assistant professor of art at The [College of Saint Rose](#).

In Meyer's sculptures, tiny naked people interact in futuristic

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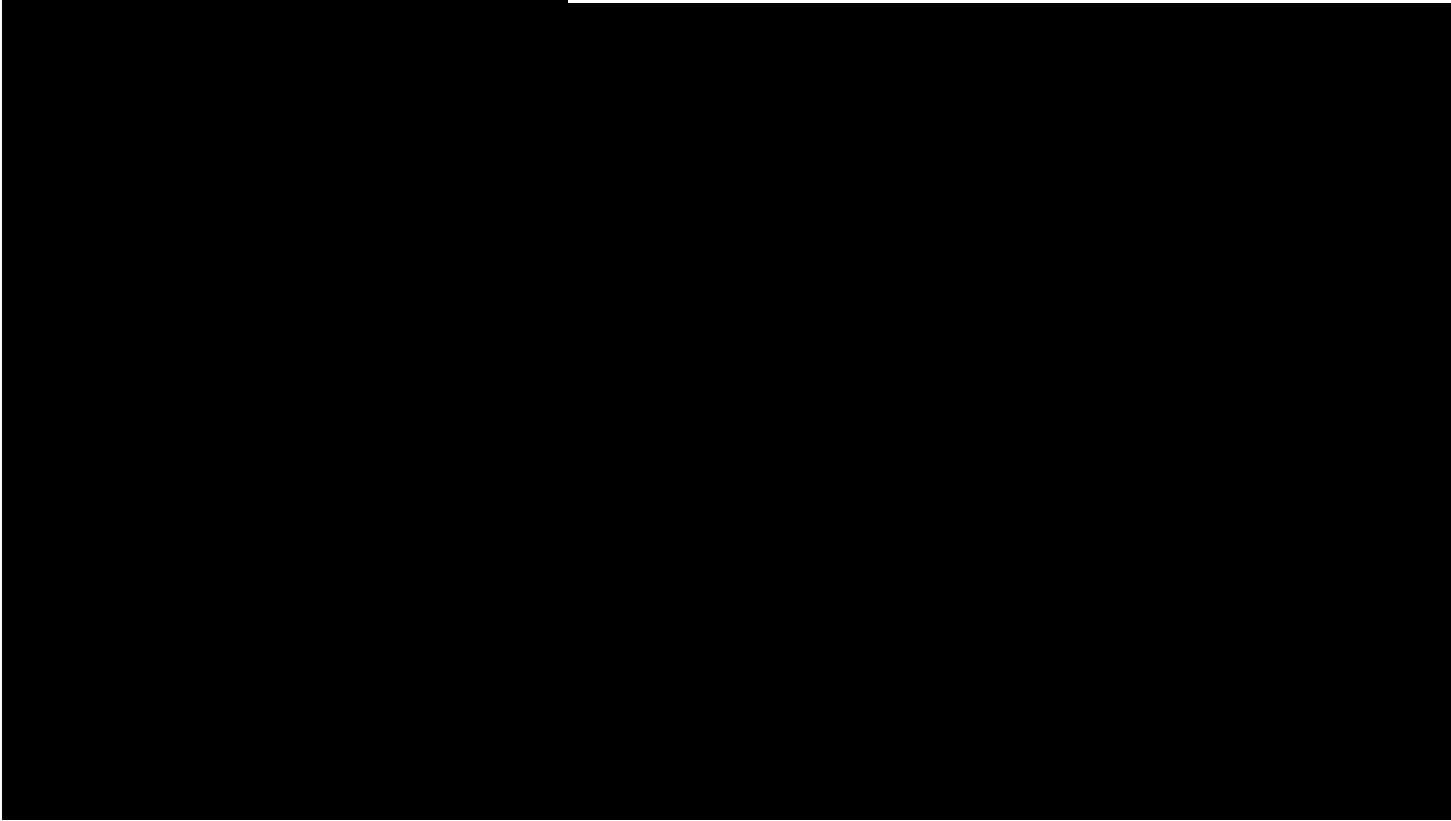


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landscapes, environments built by stacking layers and cutting into sheets of acrylic. In her piece "Together," two stacked forms that hang from the ceiling over a sheet of yellow, mirrored acrylic. These resemble cross-sections of amorphous modernist buildings populated with HO-scale figures going about their business. This strange environment is made mostly of clear acrylic sheets contrasted with blue and yellow accents.

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Her artist statement notes the influence of philosophical ideas about communal living, hence the naked protagonists. Even without that revelation, these sculptures are compelling objects on their own. In both "Vinyl" and "Hideaway," she stacks clear, multicolored acrylic sheets, cutting contours that form steps, ponds and caves. Natural light streams in through the clear sheets, and they begin to resemble geological models.

The fragmented environments McBride creates in gouache on panel are depopulated, but people are suggested in the spaces she depicts: roads, houses and garages. In "Habitat," a lone polar bear walks in what looks like an indoor zoo diorama, but the space is altered, almost abstracted. With "Atlas," she does something similarly intriguing: the curled pages of a road atlas protrude from a dashboard, but look like a wave washing over the landscape. In the sky, a UFO appears as a faint outline in relief but painted over, as if the artist changed her mind.

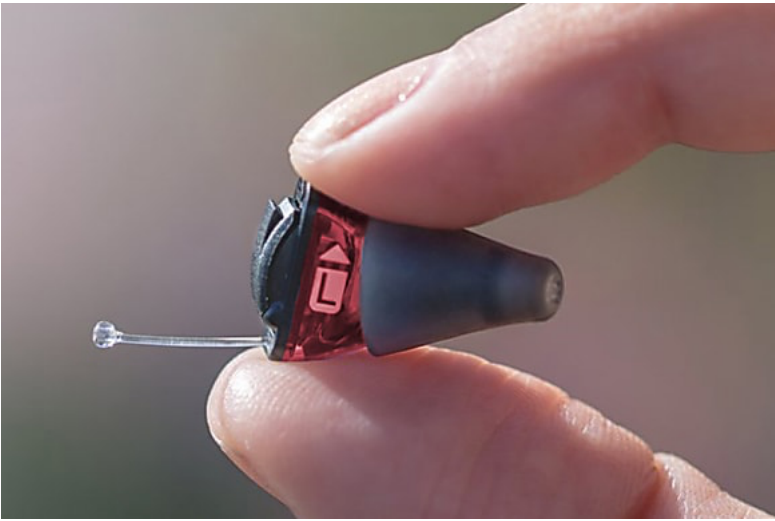
With "Bufflehead and Coots," the space becomes even more fragmented, with one section a faithful rendering of a domestic scene, but with other parts of the piece becoming ambiguous. Intimate and somewhat surreal, McBride's paintings turn quotidian moments upside-down.

The drawings of Paabus and the paintings of Alter resonate nicely



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