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Ready for Takeoff, Cap'n

The new Visual Arts Pavilion in Hollywood starts out, at least, unshackled by rules

By Michael Mills

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ROBIN HILL

Hollywood's new art space appears poised to soar into the sky.



A section of Michelle Weinberg's *Unswep Floor*.

Details:

"The Inaugural Exhibition" On display through January 31 at the Visual Arts Pavilion at ArtsPark, One Young Circle, Hollywood; 954-921-3520.

It comes into view as you round the southern curve of Young Circle in Hollywood. Perched on a plot of park land on the eastern edge of the circle, across from a Publix parking lot, it looks poised and ready. Neither bird nor plane nor Superman, it is nevertheless an unearthly form that appears prepared to soar into the sky.

The object in question is the new Visual Arts Pavilion at ArtsPark, and the building itself is one of three crucial components of "**The Inaugural Exhibition**" at the park. The other two are a small show of mixed-media works by Francie Bishop Good and a handful of preparatory works for a permanent installation by Michelle Weinberg.

The building is the work of project designer and architect Margi Nothard Glavovic, who previously gave us the love-it-or-hate-it cantilevered stairway and bridge to the second floor of the Museum of Art Fort Lauderdale. That otherworldly work was created and installed for the museum's *Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs* exhibition a couple of years ago. Like the stairway, the arts pavilion comes across as a bundle of anachronisms, simultaneously an artifact of the past and something flown in from the future.

Glavovic draws on the basics of mid-century modern architecture. The structure's sharp, triangular roof juts into the sky with an assertion of optimism, capturing the '50s-style futurism of that classic trend in its South Florida incarnation. The building's drama is such that it appears much larger than it actually is. The functional spaces beneath that slab of roof are both simple and elegant and emphasize a continuity between outdoors and indoors. At the southern end of the pavilion, a cluster of small studios opens onto a sort of miniature

amphitheater, where visitors will be able to observe artists at work. One of the studios is outfitted with equipment for glassblowing and metalworking.

Inside, an airy atrium with one wall of east-facing windows offers a small venue for exhibitions, and there's a medium-sized multipurpose room with easy access to the studio spaces. Upstairs, another, much larger multipurpose space with hardwood floors, polished to an impossible sheen, is essentially a dance studio that can double as a rehearsal space for theater groups or even serve as a meeting room. All in all, the pavilion is a promising indication that Glavovic isn't intimidated by a major public commission of this sort.

Glavovic's models and sketches for the project are on display downstairs, along with straightforward documentation of the finished project by Miami-based photographer Robin Hill, known for chronicling mid-century modern. The atrium is dominated, however, by the small but potent exhibition of mixed-media paintings by Good, assembled by independent curator Nina Arias and the Harold Golen Gallery's Donnamarie Baptiste, both of Miami. The able contributions of Hill, Arias, and Baptiste are welcome, but they also raise a potentially troubling question: If a high-profile project like the ArtsPark can't draw on more local talent for its initial show, does this bode well for the future of the arts in Broward?

It's entirely fitting, however, that the Broward-based Good is included in the inaugural team. Her work in painting, photography, and video has been displayed in venues throughout South Florida for many years, and she and husband David Horvitz have long provided considerable support for local art institutions.

I've had mixed reactions to Good's work over the years. The artist, who was present at the opening, crept up behind me and said, in a wary rather than confrontational way, "You hate my work, don't you?" True, I found the photos and video captures in her "Carly TV" exhibition at MOA a few years ago just this side of creepy. But this new body of work, known collectively as *Snapshots From My Life*, is full of vigor — it's Good's most exuberant art in years.

Carly — the artist's niece, who became the subject of Good's camera's gaze at age 7 and is now in her late teens — is still present in some of the images, although she is now just one component in the compositions rather than the primary focus of them. That's very much a good thing, as is the artist's return to painting.

The more than two dozen individual pieces that collectively make up *Snapshots* are technically mixed-media works, in which Good takes a photographic image and prints it directly onto canvas. Along the way it is subjected to various interventions. Sometimes the images are manipulated by computer before they're printed; other times Good paints directly onto the printed photo with acrylics and oils; and occasionally she ends up with something that's closer to collage than anything else. (There are also half a dozen large, unaltered photographs displayed separately from the mixed-media works.)

The results are wonderfully gestural, with great swoops of the paintbrush leaving behind squiggles and big, bold stripes. Sometimes the pigment has been thinned out to a pale wash that lets sections of the photos show through. But in the best works, Good applies the paint so thickly and with such gusto and abandon that the images go largely, sometimes entirely, into abstraction. There's a playfulness at work here that seems entirely unforced.

I came away convinced that Good has seriously underestimated herself as an abstract painter. She told me she approached this series — which is part of a larger body of work she calls "a work in progress" — with an attitude of "there are no rules," and that approach has liberated her in startling, exhilarating ways. I hope she continues in this mode.

Michelle Weinberg is the other fine-arts practitioner represented in "The Inaugural Exhibition." She's a veteran of public art whose *Unswep Floor* is planned as a permanent installation on the steps of that little amphitheater adjacent to the pavilion's studio area. For now, though, it too is a work in progress, seen here in fragments that hint at what it may ultimately become.

Inspired by the detritus left on an unswept floor in the emperor Hadrian's villa in ancient Rome, Weinberg wants to create a mosaic in which ceramic re-creations of debris are embedded among marble tiles. A dozen or so gouache drawings of some of the items are displayed on a wall in one of the pavilion studios, and the artist has assembled a sample section that shows things like representations of a pocket calculator, a quarter, a pencil, a matchbook, a leaf, and various food wrappers and containers, all couched in the marble as if they were dropped there by careless visitors. It's less gimmicky than it may sound, probably because Weinberg, like Good, seems guided by a sense of play.

The no-holds-barred attitude of the artists toward the pavilion seems to be shared by the facility's primary supporter, the Greater Hollywood Arts Foundation. GHAF president Steven E. Shulman actually uses Good's exact words, "there are no rules," in discussing the project's potential. He envisions a versatile pavilion, wide open to the wants and needs of the artistic community that uses it. I hope this openness and sense of commitment are genuine and not just another example of government paying lip service, because Broward is in desperate need of such arts facilities.