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# Colorado artists featured at free exhibit during Biennial

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When it comes to art and the Biennial of the Americas, most of the attention so far has focused on the month-long event's core exhibition, featuring works by 24 artists from North and South America.

While that show, titled "The Nature of Things," might be the main attraction, it is hardly alone. A few dozen other biennial-related art offerings are taking place at museums, galleries and other venues across the city.

Among the largest and most fun of these ancillary exhibitions is the inventively titled "Objectophilia," which is on view through July 25 in two makeshift spaces near the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver, 1485 Delgany St.

Unlike most of the other shows, which focus on artists from outside the state, about 70 percent of the 45 participants in this offering are from Colorado, making it the biggest showcase for area talent during the biennial.

Making sure that Colorado artists had a presence during the mini-world's fair was the driving force behind Lauri Lynnxe Murphy's desire to organize "Objectophilia" in conjunction with MCA Denver.

How all the pieces fit together is sometimes ambiguous, and the two spaces — one a former residence, the other undeveloped retail space — are hardly conducive to displaying art.

But it is hard not to be impressed by the high quality of many of these pieces and the unexpected level of ambition that Murphy brought to this project, considering the constraints of time and money she faced.



Jon Reitfors of Glenwood Springs, "View of Sky and Clouds With Disposable Coffee Cups," 2009, color photographs on resin.

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But it is hard not to be impressed by the high quality of many of these pieces and the unexpected level of ambition that Murphy brought to this project, considering the constraints of time and money she faced.

The Denver artist managed to put together the show on a shoestring budget of just \$14,000, which came from the Biennial and the Gill Foundation. Although she began preliminary planning more than a year ago, she was not able to issue formal invitations to artists until 2 1/2 months ago when she was certain of the funding.

Drawing on the meaning of "objectophilia" — an intense love of inanimate things — this exhibition examines such sustainability-related

themes as consumerism, over-consumption and hoarding.

"We love our computers, find our cars sexy and lust over shoes, while driving the economy and the planet to the brink of orgasmic collapse," Murphy writes.

While the show contains a selection of paintings, photographs and other two-dimensional objects, it is the sculptures and installations, many incorporating found objects, that prove to be the strongest.

### Highlights:

- Terry Maker, "Reptilius Consumerus Devourus," 2010. The Denver artist has strung together scores of segmented papier-mache slices of shredded currency and checks to form an eye-grabbing 60-foot snake — the ideal metaphor for pernicious greed.

- Chris Purdie, "Spine," 2010. The Utah artist has assembled two opposing rows of 20 undulating used lamps in various styles and shapes into a surprisingly elegant corner installation.

- Jen Omaitz, "Architectonic Gesture: Merzing in Denver" (2010). Using loose architectural models and other elements, Omaitz, a former Denverite who moved to Cleveland three years ago, has built an intricate, wrap-around installation that is nothing short of spectacular.

It is often said, but there is surely something for every taste in this expansive, Colorado-centered exhibition. And free admission only adds to its appeal.

### "OBJECTOPHILIA."

**Art.** Spilt between 1490 Delgany St. and 1900 16th St. Forty-five artists most from Colorado — are featured in this sprawling two-part exhibition, which is running in conjunction with the Biennial of the Americas. Through July 25. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays and 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Fridays. Free. 720-984-9852 or [objectophiliadenver.wordpress.com](http://objectophiliadenver.wordpress.com)

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Chris Purdie of Utah, "Spine," 2010, found lamps and extension cords.