

The Calendar

An Art Walk in the Garden

Stonecrop mounts first of three 2025 exhibits

By Marc Ferris

Stonecrop Gardens has hosted exhibits for more than 20 years. But since building its Gardeners' Bothy in 2021 — it still smells of fresh-cut wood — the sprawling Philipstown property now has a proper place to showcase art.

"We're all about gardening, but a lot of people come through here and it's nice to put something on the walls and collaborate with others," says Barbara Scoma of Stonecrop, who helped coordinate *A Hudson Valley Sampler*, which opens with a reception at 3 p.m. on Sunday (April 6).

It is the first of three shows scheduled for 2025. Kate Cahill, gallery coordinator at the Garrison Art Center, brought together six artists with a focus on flora from the area.

The oil paintings on wood by Jackie Skrzynski, who lives in Newburgh, capture hyper details, like the delicate folds of withered leaves after a killing frost. The veins and burned, ruffled gray edges convey realism. A painting of mushrooms, "Late Oysters," shows the texture of the gills underneath some of the caps and plays with a sheen of light.

A few artists share works that resemble scientific drawings. The fine technique involved is apparent but they also radiate humanity.

In her gesso, acrylic, gouache and pencil works, Monique Luchetti details the root systems of four weeds rather than what's visible. She uses fibrous Nepalese lokta paper, which presents an absorptive, crinkly texture, like a leaf.



"City of Peace," from the *Planting Utopia* series by Julia Whitney Barnes



"Mums the Word," by Allyson Levy

Wendy Hollender's watercolors of apples, a Stone Ridge tomato, sweet cherries and a watermelon radish, fine-tuned with colored pencils, include seeds and a depiction of each subject cut in half.

Her shading and detail are masterful. In "Red Delicious Apple," a hint of light shines off the skin; another glint reflects from a seed. She documents the location (Westwood Orchard in Accord) and adds tasting notes: "Flavor sweet and lemony."

The most mystical works — four pieces from the series *Planting Utopia* by Julia Whitney Barnes — are created with watercolor, gouache and India ink. The cyanotype process (created by exposure to the sun) is integrated into the designs. The scenes seem cosmic and, like Skrzynski's work, dark backgrounds make the colors and plant-based patterns pop.

Ruth Leonard's two oils and three watercolors focus on inviting outdoor scenes that

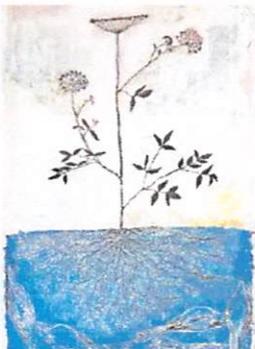
burst with color, including the lush, inviting pathway meadow that cuts through towering plants and flowers as mountains beckon in the distance.

The work of Allyson Levy embeds cactus, seaweed, spurge weed, birch bark, poppy flower tops and chrysanthemum petals in wax paint, which encases the material onto the wood panels. The white wax is laid so thick over the four smaller square frames, it looks like she melted candles.

Stonecrop Gardens, at 81 Stonecrop Lane in Philipstown, off Route 301, is open Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and select Sundays (weekend visits require reservations at stonecrop.org). Admission is \$10 (\$5 seniors, children, teens; free for members). A Hudson Valley Sampler continues through June 21. Stonecrop's other exhibits will be Bloomers and the Bugs They Love (July 7) and Tri-State Botanical Artists (Sept. 1).



"Daucus Carota," by Monique Luchetti



"Angelica sylvestris," by Monique Luchetti



"Meadow," by Ruth Leonard



"Red Delicious Apple," by Wendy Hollender