
BARK



CEDAR CREST COLLEGE

BARK

November 2 - December 11, 2026

Henry Klimowicz
Jim Toia
Madeline Schwartzman
Pat Badt
Sarah McCoubrey
Scott Sherk

Center for Visual Research
Cedar Crest College

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BARK brings together six artists whose practices in some way engages trees and forests through texture, mark, structure, and sound. The exhibition considers bark not only as surface, a skin inscribed by time, weather, pressure, and growth but also as sound. Bark, a short, explosive sound can be an order and suggests vibrations and rhythms. These are also descriptors used in the visual realm. Process, layering, repetition and material buildup reflect natural cycles of decay, regeneration, and persistence. These too are descriptors used in the visual realm. At a time of ecological fragility, trees and forests stand as both vulnerable systems and models of resilience. This exhibition proposes that trees are not silent. Through mark, material, rhythm and space, they continue to sing. BARK asks to pay attention — to surface, to structure and to resonance. It asks viewers to slow down and listen both visually and aurally.

The artists in this show exhibit a range of approaches to the natural environment from subject matter to their use of materials. Henry Klimowicz's assemblages evoke forests through accumulated materials transformed by time and touch. His works become objects that seem unearthed rather than constructed.

Jim Toia approaches nature through sculpture and drawing, translating organic systems into structures that feel simultaneously architectural and biological. His work examines how growth unfolds through repetition, balance and connection, revealing parallels between natural processes and human systems of making.

Madeline Schwartzman's approach is interdisciplinary, although here we are seeing its documentation. Rather than representing nature, her work creates opportunities to inhabit it differently.

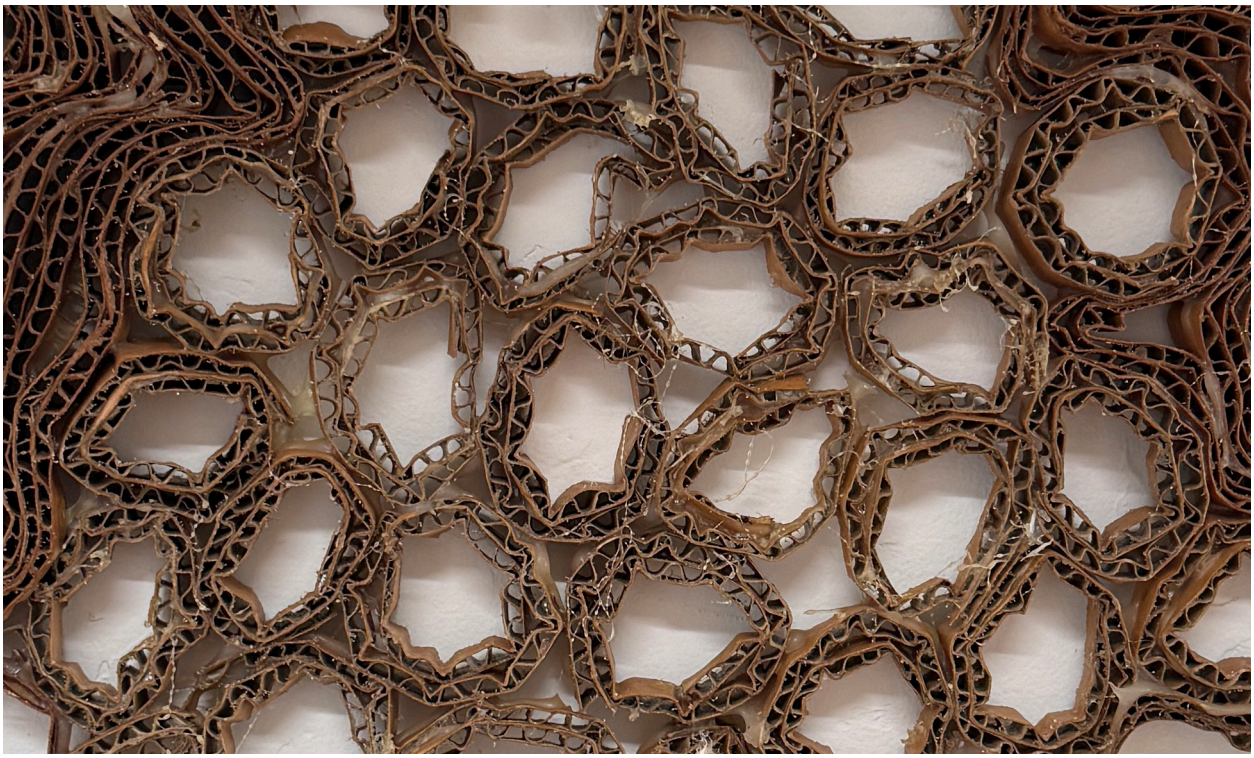
Pat Badt's paintings emerge from sustained observation of nature while moving beyond direct representation. Layers of line and luminous color evoke branches, canopies, shifting light, and atmospheric depth without describing any singular place. Her paintings occupy the space between abstraction and landscape, suggesting the rhythms of growth and seasonal transformation. The paintings become meditations on interconnectedness—visual equivalents.

Sarah McCoubrey's work reveals an intimate understanding of nature and ecological processes. Through careful attention to natural forms she considers the fragile balance that our effect on the world has had. Her practice invites reflection on cycles of growth and decay that define every landscape, reminding us that death and renewal are inseparable aspects of living systems yet not always in balance.

Scott Sherk's video and sound compositions immerse viewers within the temporal world. Rather than documenting nature, his works create experiences of duration—wind through leaves, changing light, birdsong, silence, and movement that often escape conscious notice. Sound becomes an ecological medium, allowing audiences to perceive the world not only visually but as dynamic communities in constant conversation.

Cedar Crest College is a perfect setting for this exhibition as it is home to the William F. Curtis Arboretum. Over 140 species of trees from most continents grow on this 84 acre campus. Situated within this remarkable setting BARK transforms Cedar Crest College into a place where art and landscape converge, inviting visitors to listen closely to the stories written in bark, branch, and leaf.

The Third Barn, Curator



HENRY KLIMOWICZ

Henry Klimowicz received his MFA from The Tyler School of Art and Architecture in 1990. He was a student at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 1984. Klimowicz was a grant recipient from the Berkshire Taconic Foundation in 2012 and is an active and integral part of his regional art community, the Hudson Valley north of New York city. The Re Institute, an alternative art gallery in his studio, a 1960 dairy barn is the nexus of this outreach to the community over the last 16 years. The goal of the space is to allow artists to see growth in their understanding of their own work from their unique use of this large dairy barn. He has fostered an art community that promotes conversation between individuals around art making and viewing.

His work as a sculptor is continuous. Since 1986 Klimowicz has made work with corrugated cardboard — a humble material. The use of cardboard is the starting place for understanding the work, but cardboard is not what you see at first glance. The pieces often present as something from nature: lichen, burls, seaweed, wasp nests. He sees his process as much like an insect, building instinctively and often mindlessly, letting the work tell him where to go. For Klimowicz creativity comes from the act of doing / making.

www.henryklimowicz.com

Klimowicz, *Filled Space*, detail, cardboard, 17 x 17 x 1/2, 2023



Klimowicz, *K's on Fungus-v.2*, cardboard, 21 x 18 x 10, 2020



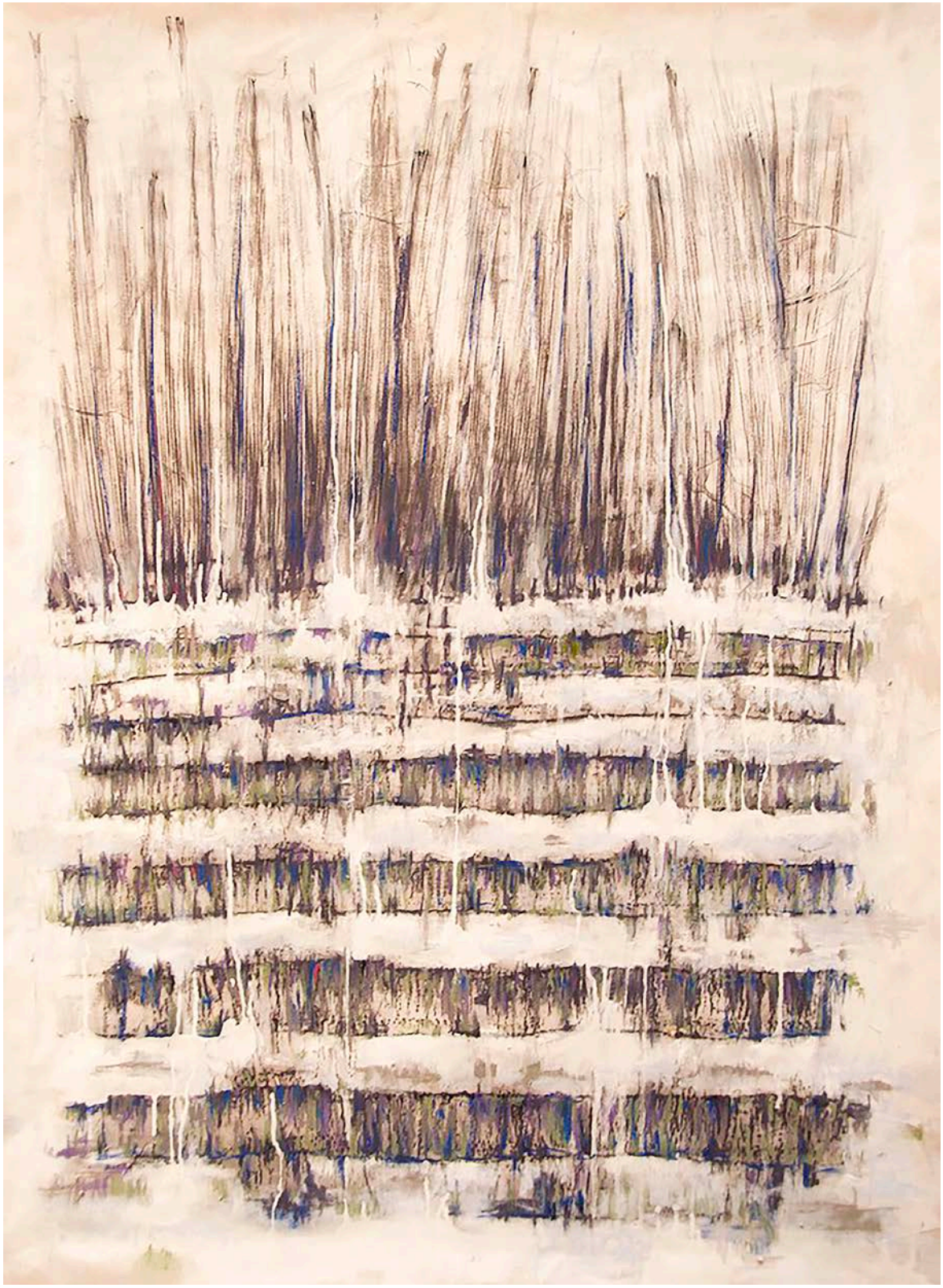
JIM TOIA

Jim Toia generates work by exploring structures and processes of nature in environments around the world, but his primary studios are in Northwestern New Jersey and the Florida Keys. He sought the hills, valleys, and river basins of NJ as both a refuge from the metropolitan area and as a place close to the New York art world, where he has exhibited regularly for almost four decades. When in Key West, Toia spends time peering into the straits of Florida, searching out life below. He received his BA from Bard College in 1984 and an MFA from the School of Visual Arts in 1993.
His work has been exhibited throughout the United States, Europe, and the Far East. The many collections that own his work include the Yale Museum of Art, the NJ State Museum, the AT&T Collection, the Dallas Museum of Art, Stamford University, the Newhouse Collection and more. He is the recipient of multiple grants and awards, including a 2000 & 2025 New Jersey State Council on the Arts Fellowship and a Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Grant. Jim Toia teaches at Lafayette College and is the Executive Director and primary curator of the Karl Stirner Arts Trail in Easton, PA.

Toia says:" *"I seek to convey the absolute brilliance of circumstance and contingency. When successful, the viewer becomes aware of the fragility of the moment, realizes the miracle of our predicament, and bends to the fascination of pure experience."*

www. jimtoia.com

Toia, *Cowboy Lust*, variable compositions, 21' tree segments, strap hinges, 2001



Toia, *Squall,* Pine tree rubbing with graphite, gouache, charcoal & pastel, 2022



MADELINE SCHWARTZMAN

Madeline Schwartzman is a New York City artist, writer, and educator whose work explores human narratives, the human sensorium, and human/plant interactions called Face Nature. Her book See Yourself Sensing: Redefining Human Perception (20ll) is a collection of futuristic proposals for the body and the senses. See Yourself X: Human Futures Expanded (2018) explores the future of the human head. Alive:Synthetic Cells, Feral Robots, Rebellious AI, and the Design of Radical Life (2025) explores developments in synthetic biology, robotics, artificial intelligence, engineering, and art, that have shifted our perception of what it means to be alive. She is currently in production on a feature length documentary about the Amazon rainforest, combining science and art in the world's most biodiverse ecosystem.

Recent solo exhibitions include The Re Institute, Millerton NY; Mediamatic, Amsterdam; the Bruce Gallery, Edinboro Penn West; and at Berkshire Botanical Garden in Stockbridge, MA. She is a long-term faculty member at Barnard College, Columbia University and at Parsons School of Design.

www.madelineschwartzman.com

Schwartzman, *Face Nature with Honey Locust*, archival pigment print



Schwartzman, *Birch Receiver 2*, archival pigment print



PAT BADT

Pat Badt was born in Santa Monica, CA, attended High School in NYC, received a BA from the University of California, Santa Cruz and an MFA from the University of Pennsylvania. She is Professor Emeritus, Cedar Crest College. She has exhibited widely including exhibitions in Brussels, New York, Philadelphia and Los Angeles. Her work is included in collections in the American Embassy in Riga, Latvia, the Ruth Hughes Collection of Artist Books at Oberlin College, Bryn Mawr College and the University of Tennessee Knoxville. She has been the recipient of an NEA for painting and artist residencies in the US and abroad including in Portugal, Italy, Iceland and Malta.

Badt works with straight parallel lines that build a matrix of color. The paintings reflect her interest in the natural world and the interplay of light, color, texture and the patterns found in the landscape. Her work finds equivalencies, using abstract forms and vivid colors to create memory and engage the imagination. The work is an exploration of the beauty and complexity of the world we inhabit, and a celebration of its mysteries.

www.patbadt.com

Badt, *Witches Broom*, oil on panel, 30 x 24, 2022





Badt, *Long Morning* (left), *Long Afternoon* (right), oil on panel, 60 x 24, 2025



SARAH McCOUBREY

Sarah McCoubrey received a BA in English, a BFA in Painting and an MFA in Painting from the University of Pennsylvania. She attended the Yale Norfolk program. She has lived and worked in Philadelphia, Washington DC, Brussels and currently lives in Central New York. McCoubrey exhibits regularly in solo and group exhibitions. She has received numerous awards including a 2010 and 2004 New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowships in Painting, a 2006 New York State Council for the Arts Fellowship, a NYFA Special Opportunity Stipend in 2004, the Milton Avery Foundation Fellowship to the Millay Colony in 1996, a MacDowell Colony Fellowship in 1990, a National Endowment for the Arts Grant Award in1989 and an Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant Award in1981.

About 12 years ago, I spent a transformational time in the Solvay Wastebeds, a site in Camillus, NY, comprised of 40 years of deposits by a nearby soda ash production facility. ESF students planted "gardens" mimicking various biomes including an inland salt marsh, a marl fen, an alvar grassland and a Great Lakes dune. For the students it was an ecological restoration experiment; for me, a postlapsarian garden - a landscape on life-support. This sojourn affected a change in my work. I moved from considering how a landscape looks, to asking, "what if?" What if the landscape and plants and trees in it started to alter themselves. What if the earth rejected, expelled the plants, what if the plants decided to abandon the earth, or what if the plants evolved into flying vehicles. With elements of artificiality or fantasy I made images not as a chronicle but as an evocation of a speculative future.

www.sarahmccoubrey.net

McCoubrey, *Fate and Transport Floating Trees*, ink, watercolor and gouache on paper, 30 x 22", 2012



McCoubrey, *Trees*, oil on wood panel, 45 x 37 1/2", 2012



SCOTT SHERK

Scott Sherk is a sculptor who often works with sound. He has exhibited widely including exhibitions at the Katonah Museum of Art, the Allentown Art Museum, the Kim Foster Gallery NYC, and the Leslie Cecil Gallery NYC. His solo exhibitions have been favorably reviewed by the New York Times and ArtForum. His sound work has been released on CD by 3Leaves, and/OAR, and net releases by Stasisfield and Wandering Ear. Scott Sherk is a Professor Emeritus at Muhlenberg College where he has been a recipient of the Class of '32 Research Chair and twice the Hoffman Research Fellowship.

Sherk's journey began when he bought an MP3 player that also had a record function. This led to him making recordings of ambient, empty spaces that contained spatial cues, and they suggested tangible, inhabitable spaces. Sound was something that could shape space! For Sherk sculpture has increasingly become the art of space, perception and its possibilities of being a subject and an end in itself. He is interested in creating a sensitivity to environmental sound, its potential as a design resource, and its impact on our lives.

www.scott-sherk.com

Sherk, *Storm Coming-Wood Thrush,* video and sound



Sherk, *Floating White Things,* video and sound



The Third Barn, Curator

This exhibition was curated by The Third Barn, an experimental studio portal and curatorial project in an unspecified location. The Third Barn has curated several projects off-site including The Line Up, a traveling exhibition originated at Cedar Crest College, Immersion, Sound Art at Soft Machine Gallery, Plain & Fancy a traveling exhibition in collaboration with Historic Bethlehem Museum and Sites, PastPresent: Conversations Across Time at the Allentown Art Museum and Girl Band a traveling exhibition ending at the Painting Center NYC.

www.thethirdbarn.org



Center for Visual Research

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Hours: M – F, 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Sat. – Sun. , 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and by appointment.
Gallery closed on College holidays.
All events are free and open to the public.

Students with disabilities who are in need of transportation or accommodations for an event should contact Academic Services at 610-606-4628 or at advising@cedarcrest.edu.