

The Art of Found Objects Serves as a Who's Who of Contemporary Texas Artists



Embodied Ghost, by Robert Dampier (Galveston), is featured in *The Art of Found Objects: Interviews With Texas Artists*. The artist was swindled by a Houston gallery in 2003 and now works exclusively with collectors and fans. Photo by Robert Dampier

It takes an artist's eye to open the kitchen junk drawer and see the potential for something more, arranging random odds and ends until they take on a new incarnation as assemblage or sculpture. A new book by Robert Craig Bunch offers a brief history of some of the earliest adopters of found materials over the past century, before leading into a series of interviews with 64 contemporary Texas artists. For art world insiders, ***The Art of Found Objects: Interviews With Texas Artists*** is a veritable Who's Who of prominent local

gallerists, artists and curators. He gives nods to Houstonians Karin Broker and Edward Lane McCartney for braving uncharted territory and agreeing to interviews long before the book was even a twinkle in Bunch's eye.

Those early interviews, as well as one with James Michael Starr (Dallas), were so successful that Bunch – who works as an assistant librarian at the McNay Art Museum in San Antonio – had the tools he needed to seek and secure funding to continue the project.



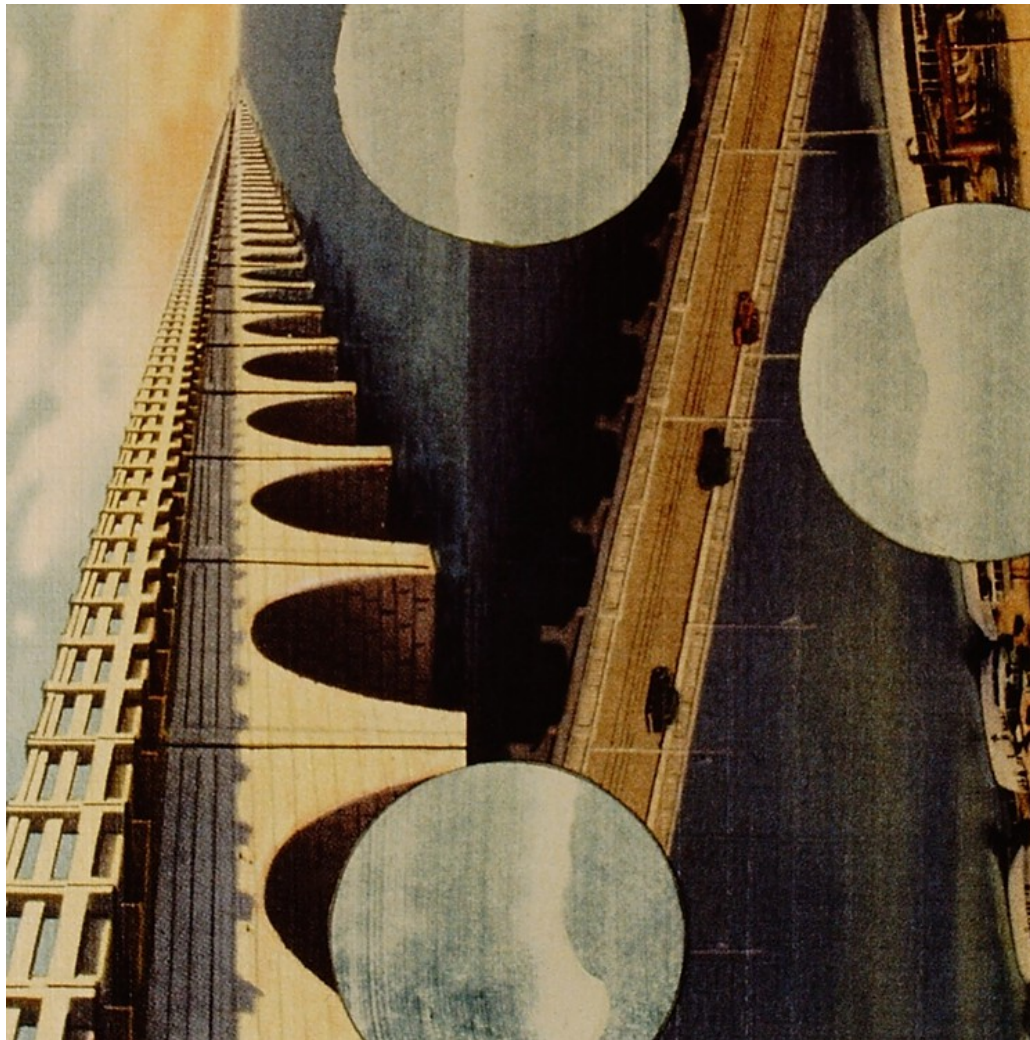
My Collection of Measuring Devices, by Marilyn Lanfear (San Antonio), is featured in *The Art of Found Objects: Interviews With Texas Artists*. In the book she recalls some of her performance pieces that involved running to leave and retrieve talismans.

Photo by Ansen Seale

In trying to decide between telephone and email interviews, Bunch chose the latter (along with in-person visits), and the resulting answers are thoughtful and laced with anecdotes. Each interview includes a small photograph from the artist's body of work, allowing his/her words to take center stage.

Although Bert L. Long Jr. passed away in 2013, his words (and wisdom) are preserved forever in this book: "Everything is art and art is everything." Long spoke with Bunch about how life-changing it was to have been awarded the Rome Prize, and how he hoped the book interview would leave a legacy.

"What's a couple hours? Maybe some young kid or somebody that's in the art world or some historian or something, somebody that's trying to figure something out...maybe two minutes of this tape might make a difference," said Long in his meeting with Bunch, adding that he had an obligation to black and white kids, and to artists of the future and the past.



Laws and Forms of Water, Kathleen Packlick (Houston), is featured in *The Art of Found Objects: Interviews With Texas Artists*. The first autographs she ever requested were from William S. Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg, serendipitously on Jack Kerouac's birthday.

Photo by Kathleen Packlick

An art exhibit featuring work by artists mentioned in the book - Claire Cusack, Ann Harithas, Joseph Havel, Otis Huband, Sharon Kopriva, Jesse Lott, McCartney, Leila McConnell, Mari Omari, Kathleen Packlick, Forrest Prince, Russell Prince, Patrick Turk and Debbie Wetmore - is on view beginning November 2 at Lone Star College's Kingwood Art Gallery.

There's an opening reception and book signing from noon to 2 p.m. November 3. Regular viewing hours are 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays. Through December 12. Kingwood Art Gallery, 20000 Kingwood Drive, Kingwood, 281-312-1534, lonestar.edu/arts-kingwood.htm.