

## Sherry Owens + Art Shirer Installation

Near my Jefferson, Texas studio lies a boardwalk that winds through the forest and connects to a park near downtown. In the forest, a large art installation has risen up off the ground. This art piece is made of wire and shiny glass. The structure is hollow with wires weaving like vines all around. Over a thousand little glass objects balance like miniature kinetic sculptures. This ambitious project is the undertaking of two artists, Sherry Owens, and Art Shirer. Both are from Dallas and they have worked together on several projects in the past. They just came off of a project in Austin at the Umlauf Sculpture Center earlier this year. The installation in Austin might have been constrained by the space, but the forest in Jefferson, allows Owens and Shirer to let their installation loose. The main structure titled "the forest echoes with laughter" can be seen from the boardwalk from three sides. Two of the sides you can look through the object. I was fortunate enough to be invited up close. So close, they invite me to help with installing the glass pieces, and I gladly joined them. They have had several volunteers help them install this piece over the course of a few weeks. Even with all this rain, they had the deadline to meet this Saturday.



The wire-framed art piece may be the centerpiece, but another artwork titled “above and beyond” gives you a clue that something exciting is about to occur just before you encounter this large structure. As you walk down the boardwalk that enters the forest you might notice rocks on poles on the left and right of the boardwalk. They seem to trail off into the forest. I like the fact you can’t tell where these poles end. A sense of infinity is created with this work, like looking into two mirrors facing each other.

The sense of infinity is balanced with the feeling of the finite from the large installation piece. Being limited in size by the borders of the boardwalk and limited by being anchored to the trees, the large form manages to give a sense of lightness and life. Life is short, but that makes it all the more beautiful.

Lastly, Sherry Owens and Art Shirer created a work with local Jefferson school children titled “oodles of doodles.” I haven’t seen the piece yet, but I have heard a lot of positive things about it from both artists, so I guess I will have to see it on Saturday.





Installation View

— Todd Camplin