

BY DAVE MADDEN

EXPANDED UNIVERSE

Carnegie Mellon moves its exhibition program from the small old Hewlett to the big new Miller Gallery.

TERMITE TV

BY VARIOUS ARTISTS

CONVERSATIONS IN THE RUSTBELT: BROWNFIELDS INTO GREENWAYS

BY THE NINE MILE RUN PROJECT GROUP

SWELLS AND EXTENSIONS

BY SHARON LOUDEN

REGINA GOUGER MILLER
GALLERY // CARNEGIE MELLON
UNIVERSITY, OAKLAND
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WHILE IT'S AMAZING what a lot of money can do, it's even more amazing that some people

will actually give money to organizations that actually need it. Why help develop an arts program at a university when you could just buy a yacht, or influence a presidency? Seeing the new Regina Gouger Miller Gallery inside Carnegie Mellon's new Purnell Center makes you stop and thank these filthy rich alumni for putting their money to good, honest use.

And the Miller Gallery really is good use. With respect to its predecessor, the Hewlett Gallery, director Petra Fallaux considers the Miller to be more of an extension thereof, rather than a replacement (even though the Hewlett will soon be turned into a cafe). The Miller is 10 times the size of the

Hewlett, and has three times the number of floors. So the exhibits Carnegie Mellon shows can now be larger in size and scope — and can be shown in their entirety on any one of the Miller Gallery's three floors.

The Miller's opening exhibits are intended as a showcase of the completely different spaces and abilities of each floor. The first floor is designed to hold video and performance installations; currently it's showing *Termite TV*, a "living documentary" series by a Philadelphia-based video collective. *Termite TV* — which, at around 10 hours, you won't see all of unless you've got a whole day free — travels around the country telling stories of the many cultures that have called America home.

The second floor is intentionally unfinished, with high ceilings and concrete floors. Fallaux calls this floor the gallery's "project space"; it currently holds the latest development by the Nine Mile Run group. You may have seen the Nine Mile Run Project on display at the Wood Street Galleries this past summer. Now, with more space at its disposal, the exhibit includes several new components — the most interesting of which are the works made in the children's program. Kids' drawings are shown alongside questions the young artists evidently were asked. For instance, one piece says: "Define this vocabulary word:

'aquatic insects.'" The child's answer is: "Bugs that live in polluted water."

On the immaculate third floor, which Fallaux calls the "fine arts gallery," resides Sharon Louden's *swells and extensions*, an installation designed for the new space. Here Louden works with monofilament and light. Small cords of the filament are littered around the floor — "swelling," if you will — while long thick strings of the stuff are hung from the ceiling — "extending," if you again will. The lights in the room go off for 18 seconds and then come on for 28, over and over again. When the room is dark, these filaments give off an eerie glow that's as disorienting as it is beautiful.

These three shows do an excellent job of showing off everything the new Miller Gallery can do. Now only the obvious question remains: What next? For now, Fallaux and her staff are still trying to gauge the capacities of the gallery. "When you go into a new space," she says, "you have to figure out what works." To do this, she'll be showing an M.F.A. thesis show in mid-March and a full faculty show at the end of April. The faculty show hasn't been done in a while because they haven't had the space on campus in which to hold it; now they do. Hey, thanks again, Regina Miller. **IP**