

## Spotlight Reviews | RHODE ISLAND

David Winton Bell Gallery, List Center, Brown University/Providence  
[www.brown.edu/Facilities/David\\_Winton\\_Bell\\_Gallery/](http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/David_Winton_Bell_Gallery/)

### **INTRANSIT FROM OBJECT TO SITE**

Ten installations make a visual smorgasbord in this exhibition, which fills the Bell Gallery and surrounding List Center space in eclectic, ground-to-ceiling, wall-to-wall design. The most engaging among them resonate in ways that are mythic or topical.

Hundreds of tiny mirrors, attached to black, tie-wire painted bronze, reflect the prevailing light in the main lawn between buildings in Sharon Louden's enchanting *Fairies*. The wire, more than 200,000 feet of it, hand-cut and arranged to represent the bare bramble that runs rampant in the autumnal Rhode Island landscape, blends in seamlessly with the sloping grass. Whether glittering in the sun's angled light or flashing headlights, moonlight or campus lighting at night, the flickering, shimmering discs suggest fireflies and fairy folk, transforming the otherwise nondescript yard into an otherworldly dimension.

Xavier Veilhan's *Mobile*, suspended inside the main lobby, is composed of fifty spheres in various sizes and rods of different lengths, all computer-designed pieces made of plastic and painted black. The structure is explosive and cosmic, like a snapshot of the Big Bang just after the chaos of creation. Part of its appeal lies in its constant motion, disrupted and altered whenever someone walks through the lobby, changing the spatial relationship.

Arlene Chung's *Untitled (The Legacy of Gaetan Dugas)*, consisting of hundreds of syringes, dangles from the ceiling of the interior lobby, sharp needles and colored tubes looming ominously overhead like the tips of poisoned arrows in a scene from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. The piece transcends its direct reference to AIDS, however, suggesting the range of diseases, illnesses, and plagues that threaten the world in the age of globalization.

Macabre and melancholic, Fred Wilson's *Black Void—Black Tears* occupies the Bell Gallery like an abstract scrapbook recording memory and consciousness. Bulbous black drips and blobs made of blown glass suggest tears born of experience and leaks sprung from the wearing away of time. Each individual piece is titled—*Black Memory*, *Black Present*, *Chandelier Mori*, *Cry* and *Psst!* among them—providing a concrete context for the abstractions, most of which convey a sense of sorrow and loss over a sacrificial past and a neglectful present. The gothic black *Chandelier Mori*, sparkling in little white lights, hangs from the ceiling in parody of the long age of European excess, a legacy that still holds in wealthy societies created on the backs of the poor and the enslaved.

*Resolution Room* by Peggy Diggs fills the second-floor gallery. A circular pathway of footprints in sand is bisected in the center by two straight paths, covered by large rocks, forming a cross from wall to wall. The direct center of the room (and the cross) is empty, a black rectangle bordered by four red pillows. Hundreds of water glasses, objects traditionally present during negotiations, fill the spaces between cross and circle, completing the room. The water evaporates, providing tangible evidence of time passing. The work is eloquent and engaging, evoking the timeless dance of natural forms—water, rocks, sand—meeting, mingling, and wearing down one another, but remaining partners in the journey all the same.

*Doug Norris*