

LEE BOROSON

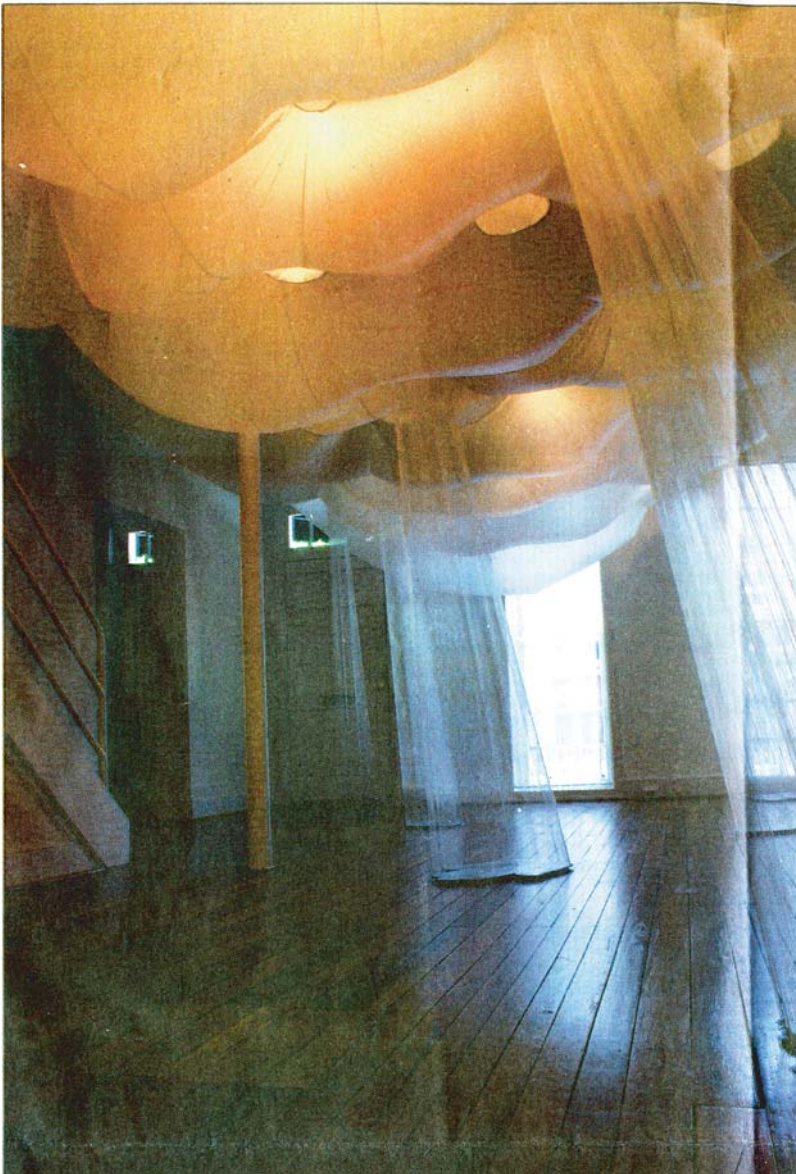
Richmond Times-Dispatch

July 18, 2004

page 1

ARTS & entertainment

www.timesdispatch.com



The room-sized "Lucky Storm" sends rays made of fishing line bursting through clouds of parachute fabric.

REYNOLDS GALLERY



REYNOLDS GALLERY

In Lee Boroson's "Wood Trim," embroidered leaves are partially detached from an undulating fabric screen.

Outside in

Sculptor challenges perceptions of seemingly settled environments

BY CLARKE BUSTARD
TIMES-DISPATCH STAFF WRITER

“Everything ends up being inside a space,” Lee Boroson learned when he became a sculptor. So, he reasoned, why not make the space part of the artwork?

When Boroson was invited to mount a show at Richmond's Reynolds Gallery, he noticed that the gallery, an old Fan District row house, has heating and air-conditioning vents on its floors. “That told me there would be interesting air flows in those rooms.”

Like the wind currents that move clouds and the breezes that move the leaves of trees.

It wasn't exactly a “Eureka!” moment. Boroson has been working with inflated and air-driven forms for seven or eight years, and the nature allegories of the Hudson River school of 19th-century landscape painters have fascinated him for

some time; so an exhibit on natural themes came . . . well, naturally.

The breezes just made it easier to bring the outdoors inside.

Boroson's Reynolds show, “Outpost,” is dominated by two pieces: “Lucky Storm,” a room-sized installation of clouds made of parachute fabric and sunbursts — or are they rain squalls? — patterned from fishing line; and “Wood Trim,” an undulating fabric screen full of partially detached embroidered leaves.

Smaller works include several light boxes in which architectural photographs are given visibly artificial overlays.

The artificiality underscores the irony of the pieces, since the buildings — one of those anonymous glass-steel-masonry boxes that dot every office park, and Pratt's Castle, a Gothic mansion that, until its demolition in the 1950s, was perhaps Richmond's most eccentric structure — are about as far removed from nature

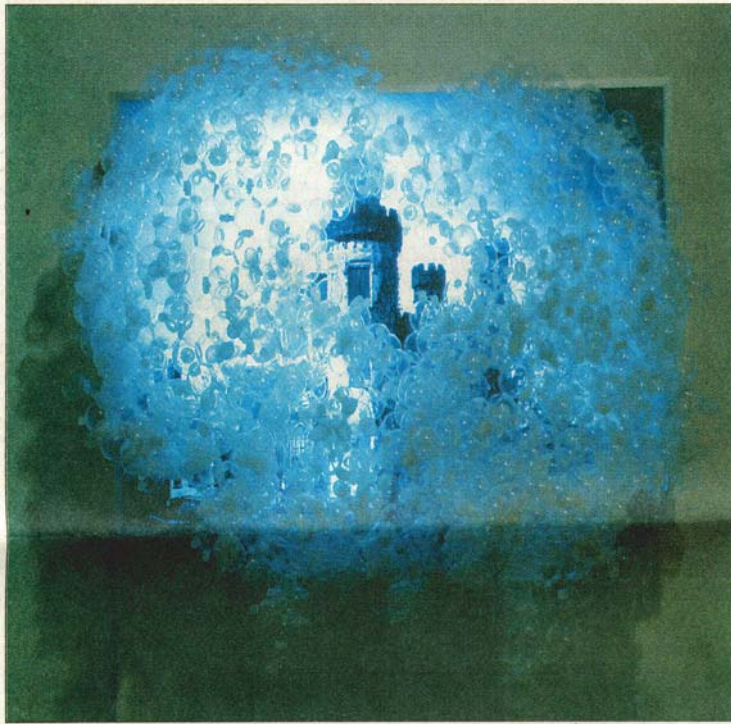
SEE BOROSON, BACK PAGE ►

LEE BOROSON

Richmond Times-Dispatch

July 18, 2004

page 2



REYNOLDS GALLERY

▼ **BOROSON** FROM PAGE 11
as their designers could make them.

"Using plastics and other man-made materials is important to what I'm doing," Boroson said in a telephone interview earlier this month. "It adds a dimension to

OUTPOST

SHOW: Sculpture and installations by Lee Boroson

AT: Reynolds Gallery, 1514 W. Main St., through Aug. 20

INFORMATION: (804) 355-6553

the viewer's response to the work.

These are representations of nature, once removed, then twice re-moved."

Weather is as ancient as Earth itself, but Boroson's

"Lucky Storm" is the product of modern technology. The oldest components of the installation (not counting the air that moves it) are light bulbs.

The 41-year-old New Yorker is probably best-known for his inflated or "pneumatic" sculptures, many of them room-sized, some of them several stories tall.



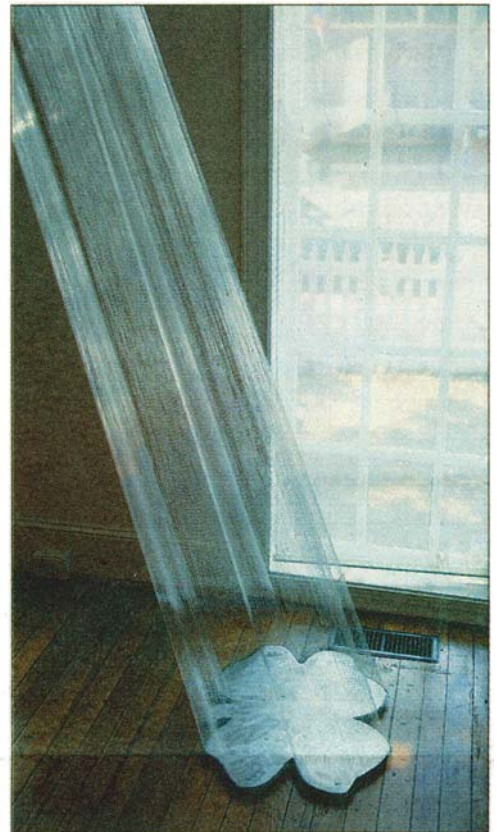
Boroson

"The first one I did," he recalled, "was a piece where a large weather balloon filled with air when

you walked into the room. You'd walk in and there seemed to be nothing there, and as the balloon inflated it pushed you out of the space."

That set the artist on a path of challenging people's perceptions of seemingly settled environments.

"We rely on the stability of principles that govern in our perception of reality," Boroson wrote earlier this year. "When this notion (of stability) deteriorates, we become aware of opportunities to make strange the familiar, and reveal our world as the ephemeral snarl of competing conditions that it is."



REYNOLDS GALLERY

Lucky Charms anchor the sunrays — or are they rain squalls? — in Lee Boroson's installation "Lucky Storm."

His art studies "the space in-between, not just in-between the walls that define a room, but the space in-between actions and individuals and events."

However dauntingly intellectual his concepts may seem, their outcomes are often whimsical or humorous.

"Humor, irony and other means of accessibility are entry points, to bring the viewer into art with a strong concept that can be off-putting," Boroson said. "Put a friendly face on the work and get the viewer to look a little further."

"The important thing is what viewers take from the work — how they reassess reality afterward."

• Contact Clarke Bustard at (804) 649-6362 or cbustard@timesdispatch.com