

FLASH ART
November – December 2006

Peekskill Projects

by Gae Savannah

Leaving visitors feeling a subtle bond of relatedness, Peekskill Project's 111 artists, selected by 16 curators, proffered engaging art interludes throughout the small historical upstate city. To start, artist Dan Seiple produced a tourism project with a free bus ride from NYC to Peekskill, complete with Hawaiian floral hats for each traveler. At the Hudson Valley Contemporary Art Center Elsie Sampson displayed treasure-packed Chinese Sweatshop zines, while at the nearby pasta factory Natalia Leginowicz's silk-screened *Moldable Matters* lavished in a corner of a raw room. The piece's graphic aqua and red Colorform-like shapes rolled over each other, buckled, twisted, drooped, and curled as Leginowicz gamboled with the pliancy of paper.

Next downtown, Judith Scott Larson's Water Town with swirling ethereal patterns projected on an exotic turret addressed multiple issues of water, while Nicolás Dumit Estévez staged an intervention during which he kept his eyes shut from arrival in Peekskill to departure. Estévez invited passerby to escort him through the city, with one empathetic participant, lighting designer John Pfeiffer, gingerly leading him on curator Alison Levy's tour for a couple of hours. Without external goals of getting somewhere or seeing something, Estevez migrated himself, Pfeiffer, and others into an interior sphere where not superficial appearances, but intimate personal rapport, vulnerability, and physical sensory experience, were guiding principles.

Finally, to the waterfront where curated by Lisa Paul Streitfeld, Daniel Rothbart held his Hudson River: *Meditation/Mediation*. In a Buddhist-like, relinquishing-control generosity, Rothbart provided various sized metal vessels to be filled with meaningful experiences of collaborating performers. Most spirited was Livia Straus's enactment of the Rosh Hashanah Tashlich ceremony ending with matzah representing sins being hurled by all into the river to be eaten by myriad birds.