

John Watrous

All Over the Map

These playful machines of hardware, wood, metals and plexi are a view into the creative path of John Watrous.

The title, All Over the Map, refers to John's many interests from astronomy, weather, ham radio, satellites, robotics to architecture, electronic music, Japanese design, and Turkish rugs. He is a former chemistry major, cowboy, motorcycle racer, electronic designer turned artist.

A fabricator, a maker, he notices how things are put together: joinery, backbones to door knobs. He's comfortable programming computer language or making found art with feathers and sand. He's part introvert, happy to be alone in his studio doing research and design.

Yet he's is also a gifted teacher who is thrilled to create new projects for his students and delights in their explorations. He has taught at Santa Rosa Junior College for almost 30 years making contact with 6,000 students. In 1983 he began teaching with computers in the art department and in the mid 90's taught the college's first online class.

The work in this show comprises a 30 year evolution, from early minimalist collages to the current sculptures. These newer inventions, containing LED lights within them, and called Glow Bugs, are smaller than the past work with an off hand reference to architectural gargoyles. Inside them the unseen underpinnings are reminiscent of ham radio wiring.

According to Buckaroo Bonzai, "No matter where you go, there you are." John is able to make himself comfortable wherever he is, waiting in a line at a crowded airport or watching the tide come in.

Recently six year old Reed Motika's eyes lighted up when he inspected the work in progress in the studio, calling them inventions. He proceeded to explain how certain cartoon characters would interact with them.

If you want to learn more about John's work and interests, visit his website: <http://jwatrous.org>

Greer Upton