

Everything is material

Julie Maynard opens 'Entrance' at TAG

BY JENNIFER LEE

Special to The News-Post

Julie Maynard moved to Frederick County in 1990 to expand on her father's creative vision. Thirty-six years later, Maynard, now a mixed-media artist, is still a Frederick resident.

Maynard will exhibit at TAG/The Artists Gallery from May 1 to 31 with an opening reception from 5 to 8 p.m. May 2 and an artist talk at 3 p.m. May 23.

This new show is a nod to Maynard's roots in traditional photography and will include black-and-white darkroom prints in addition to her original collage art.

Maynard's mixed-media collage art is a form of painting – with paper on two- or three-dimensional surfaces, often incorporating objects picked up along the Potomac River and city streets. Her works on paper are also sometimes a mix of advertisements and illustrations torn from magazines and catalogues, and she always incorporates photography into her mixed-media collage work.

"This up-cycled art reflects on the impact our culture has on the environment and the impact that nature still has on us," Maynard said. Her new photographs also show the depth of nature-human interaction and its overall impact on the earth and its inhabitants.

The found objects she incorporates into her collages add texture and shadow lines, while the three-dimensional pieces often begin with a shape from nature – a bird, a leaf – cut from wood.

Her mixed-media artwork is layer



Courtesy photo

"Porch (Perth, Ont.)," by Julie Maynard.

settling down upon layer, which makes room for shards of the real world to emerge through photographs and mementos.

"The process of collage parallels the passing of time," Maynard said.

Her art occasionally includes paint or pastel, but lately she has been using beeswax supplied by her and her husband's beekeeping operation.

Maynard's exhibits are creative in themselves, sometimes using video to

(See **MAYNARD 22**)



"Entrance (Garden)," by Julie Maynard.

MAYNARD

(Continued from 13)

provide a soundtrack, while at times she will hang pieces overhead or high on a wall to tug at viewers' peripheral vision.

Maynard is an accomplished self-taught artist with numerous solo exhibitions. She trained as a plant physiologist and in recent years has also run a couple of small community newspapers.

Maynard is a member of the artists' cooperative at TAG in Frederick.

We recently caught up with Maynard to discuss her art.

When did you begin making art and when did you realize that you were an artist?

I made my first collages when I was six, cutting up seed catalogs. For years, I took photographs which served me well when I went to work for the family's small-town newspaper.

When my husband and I were setting up our first house, we built furniture we couldn't have afforded otherwise, and I was able to start sculpting wood. But when I realized you could add vibrant color by collaging paper onto wood, that's when I got serious about making art.

How did you go from plant physiologist to running small community newspapers to artist?

My father changed careers late in life and opened a small newspaper in Brunswick, Maryland. He was having so much fun that he convinced us to move to Maryland and open a second newspaper. Putting together a newspaper is a form of collage.

How did you come to this unique technique of mixed-media collage art?

It feels like it was by accident – gluing down shiny bits of magazines turns out to be a very satisfying way to create beauty, as well as a sense of time accumulating. Layers upon layers, plus fugitive bits of text, help suggest complexities.

What is the central theme for your upcoming exhibit at TAG in May?

My theme is portals – doors, windows, entryways – and it plays off the dual meanings of the title, "Entrance." I am showing silver gelatin prints, paper collage and a clutch of short videos.

Why "portals"? And what significance do portals hold?

Every time you enter a door you open yourself to new experience. Every time you open a window, new sounds and colors enter your life.

Can you tell us about some of the new pieces you're showing in this exhibit?

"Entrance (Red Maple)" is a digital



Courtesy photo

"River Window," by Julie Maynard.

print that shows a maple in my yard that has been cut and re-cut by utility linemen over the years – it is now more ghost than maple.

"River Window," a mixed-media collage, looks out over the Potomac River through a frame left behind by flood waters. This piece uses beeswax to layer two laser-printed hand-colored photographs.

"Entrance (Garden)," a photograph transferred onto wood with collage, shows the street entrance to one of those homes every neighborhood seems to have: the neglected one, the one no one has lived in for several years. Looking through it is like opening an old book to see what story is revealed.

"Porch (Perth, Ont.)," a gelatin silver print, is one of those subjects I can't drive past without thinking, "How on earth did a front porch end up in a meadow? How did a window end up hanging over the Potomac?" – doors, windows and other bits of houses stranded in odd places.

What do you want viewers to glean from seeing this collection?

Art is what we look at, what we pick up, what we keep, what we use. I am using photographs from my earlier life, wax made by our bees and as many different techniques as I can to tell you what I've been thinking about.

What creative surprises should visitors expect to see at your TAG exhibit?

I'm hoping the room is darker than usual, so the video projections aren't washed out. That means spotlighting the wall pieces with, hmmm, tiny spotlights? Fingers crossed.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.