

Root, 2003, clay and wire, photo by Saverio Truglia


Judy Moonelis has established a visual vocabulary that presents the familiar in an expressive and inventive linear manner. Her sculpture is reflective of a deep interest in the scientific, particularly the inner workings and underlying structures of the human circulatory and related systems. The work can suggest the kind of informative presentations one is accustomed to in natural history museum displays, though the intent here is quite different.

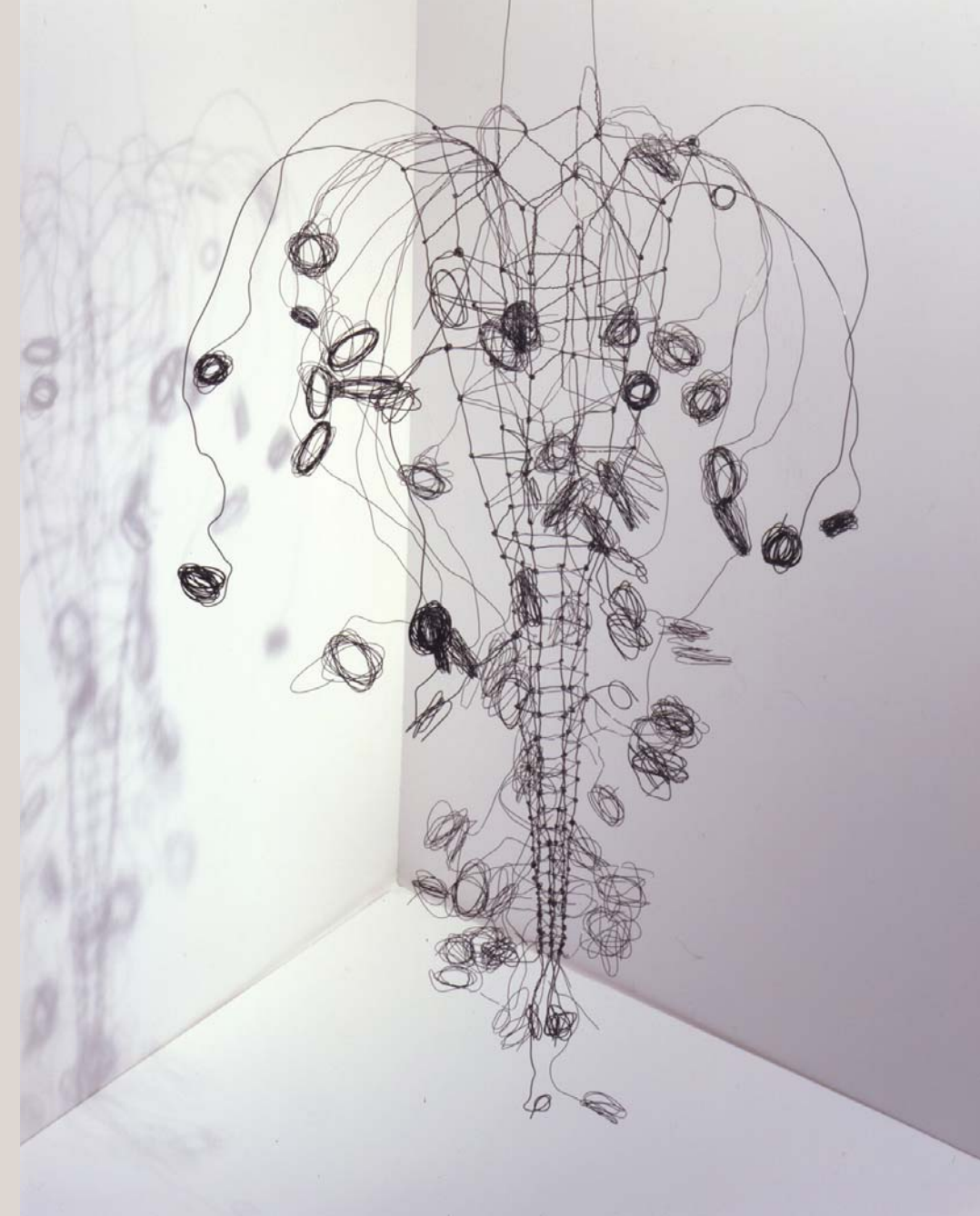
Moonelis' sculpture is delicate, organic and absorbing in its lacy intricacy. Gestures abound and there is a dance-like quality to each piece. Working with naturally occurring and humanly formed elements, the artist alludes to a world both familiar and strange. Vines or veins, arteries or limbs, the perceived and actual interchangeability of Moonelis' materials is deftly handled.

The Morris Museum is pleased to present the sculpture of Judy Moonelis as part of its continuing *New Jersey Artist Series*. In a state that celebrates creativity in the arts and sciences, Judy bridges the culture of the studio and the laboratory. While perhaps seen as opposed locales, they are quite similar. These are places that indulge discovery, inquiry and the application of ideas. Moonelis' art heralds such creatively shared characteristics.

Steven H. Miller
Executive Director, Morris Museum

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 **MORRIS**
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MUSEUM

New Jersey Artist Series: Judy Moonelis

December 23, 2003 – March 28, 2004

Reception with the artist
Sunday, February 1, 2004

Judy Moonelis: Analogy and Infinite Order

Like the strange mingling of empirical observation and mystical inspiration in a medieval anthropomorphic map of the heavens, the blending of scientific conjecture and poetic metaphor in the recent sculptures of Judy Moonelis conjures an infinite unity of which the human being is an integral part. Clay and wires refer to flesh and nerves, but this specific representation hints at a more abstract and esoteric relationship between matter and energy. Moonelis' ultimate subject is all-encompassing, a vast continuum in which analogy provides the key to order. Erratic strands of wire tremble like fine hairs in a breeze; tree branches echo not only the forms but the conveying function of bronchial tubes; and the lines of a 16th century piazza converge in mathematical diagrams of expanding and contracting universes.

These analogies suggest three fundamental instances of continuity in relation to human beings: nerves and hairs connect the body's interior and exterior; the isomorphism of a leafless oak and a bronchial tree implies the body's inseparableness from nature; and the overlapping of complex conceptions of space intimates a continuity of mind between bodies and across time. Moonelis abstractly depicts a universe in which the existence of omnipresent principles is confirmed in analogues, the repetition of forms and structures from the level of the microscopic to the cosmic, in both living things and inorganic beings, and equally in material objects, dispersions of energy, and purely conceptual states. If science as a discipline confirms this immense formal and structural continuity, the mind scarcely begins to contemplate it before succumbing to a sense of awe. Moonelis, in subjecting the data of empiricism to the imagination's potential to extrapolate from them a vision of universal order, produces works that in the end are points of departure, less finite objects than implicit invitations to contemplate the sublime.

Glen Brown is an art historian at Kansas State University and a regular contributor to *Sculpture* and *World Sculpture News*.



Branched Matrice Installation (detail), 2002–03, mixed media, photo by Saverio Truglia

Judy Moonelis

EXHIBITIONS (selected):

- 2003 Groot Foundation Exhibition Space, Chicago, IL (solo)
Museum of Arts and Design, NYC; Frankfurt Museum of Applied Arts, Germany
- 2002 Temple Gallery, Rome, Italy (solo)
Museum of Art and Design, Helsinki, Finland; Beach Museum of Art, KS
Gallery Camino Real, Boca Raton, FL
- 2000 John Elder Gallery, NYC (solo)
Mint Museum, Charlotte, NC; Bayly Museum, Charlottesville, VA
- 1998 John Elder Gallery, NYC (solo)
Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, DC
- 1997 Rhode Island School of Design Art Museum; Jewish Museum, San Francisco
- 1995 Perimeter Gallery, Chicago, IL; Racine Art Museum, WI
- 1994 Hillwood Art Museum, Greenvale, NY (solo)
- 1992 Vera List Gallery, Swarthmore, PA (solo)
- 1989 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth; Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts
- 1988 Rena Bransten Gallery, San Francisco, CA (solo)
- 1987 Boston Museum of Fine Arts, MA; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond
- 1986 Museum of Arts and Design, NYC; Denver Art Museum; Laguna Art Museum, CA

BIBLIOGRAPHY (selected):

- 2003 9th Triennial catalogue, Museum of Arts and Design and Frankfurt Museum of Applied Arts, David McFadden and Ursula Newman
- 2002 Beach Museum of Art, Glen R. Brown, catalogue
Virginia A. Groot Foundation, Margaret Carney, catalogue
- 2001 Sculpture Magazine, John Kaufman, July/August
- 1999 Ceramics: Art and Perception, John Kaufman, #40 Sculpture Magazine,
Karen Chambers, December
- 1995 Perimeter Gallery, Judy Clowes and Bruce Pepich, catalogue
- 1994 Hillwood Art Museum, Janet Koplos, catalogue
- 1993 New York Times, Helen Harrison, 12/26
- 1986 ArtNews, David Winter, January

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS (selected):

- Cranbrook Museum of Art, MI
- Everson Museum of Art, NY
- Illinois State Museum
- Mint Museum, NC
- Museum of Arts & Design, NY
- Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts
- Racine Art Museum, WI
- Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, DC

AWARDS (selected):

- 1994 Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation Fellowship
- 1991 Virginia A. Groot Foundation Grant, 1st Place Award
- 1989, 1985 New York Foundation for the Arts, Individual Fellowship
- 1986, 1980 National Endowment for the Arts, Individual Fellowship

TEACHING, LECTURES AND RESIDENCIES (selected):

- Fairleigh Dickinson University (current)
- Rhode Island School of Design; Art Institute of Chicago; Hunter College; NYU