

Gallery Walk

BY MARIAN S. MCLELLAN

WAYNE AMEDEE
Octavia Art Gallery



Wayne Amedee: Gallery view, 2014. Octavia Art Gallery.

Downtown on Julia Street at Octavia Art Gallery, more rectilinear forms are found in the two and three-dimensional works of artist Wayne Amedee, 2014 recipient of the Artist of the Year Award given by the Louisiana Office of Cultural Development and creator of the red and green sculpture in City Park, “*Grateful Labors*.”

Though the multi-media works are divided into three series, “*Consolation*,” “*Selvedge/Microcosm*,” and “*Chrysalis*,” it becomes immediately apparent to even the casual gallery goer that Amedee’s focus is on the in-between spaces that hold us up and keep us steady on unsteady ground. What is not so apparent is Amedee’s underlying support system and impetus behind the series, his beloved wife, Barbara, who died late last year, and who was a dominant presence in the New Orleans art world. Octavia’s Press portion of their website directs us to an interview in “*The Advocate*” for this personal revelation.

Hence, the wedge formations found in the largest of the

series, “*Consolation*,” are visible in two and three-dimensional offerings. The freestanding “*Consolation Series XX*” presents us with a vertebral column of soothing hues of greens and blues, apparently a favored color scheme of Amedee’s. Fashioned of solidly painted wedges of wood, the shadows cast between each wedge seem equally supportive. We find these wedge-shaped shadows playing a dominant role in the more organic, mixed media/collage “*Consolation Collage*,” where a grouping of three stacks vertically fan-out before a forest of pale greens and blues.

The “*Chrysalis*” mixed media/collage series, while being Amedee’s most delicate series and accounting for only five pieces in the exhibit, is also his most playful and talismanic. In all five, Amedee applies rectangular bits of gold foil and scraps of writing taken from Barbara’s belongings and revived in such works as the jewel-like “*Chrysalis IX*.” Still emphasizing a vertical format, but with less rigidity, the overall effect of the “*Chrysalis*” series is that of renewal.