



a soft version of a breastplate, its symmetry interrupted by a vertical row of three tightly bound, bulbous sacks each about the size of a little fist. This recent work calls to mind worn, stained amulets—things worn on the body for luck or protection.

Outterbridge's objects are simultaneously abstract and literal, animated by a coded content that functions like a fetish, poem, or dance move within the structures. The work moves from its shallow space on the wall beyond notions of bricolage and assemblage; its relationship to art history is complex and multivalent. Outterbridge has forged a unique identity in his work, rejecting the kinds of conventional conceptualizations that have led other artists toward less nuanced identity politics. Although based in and revealing aspects of the African American experience, Outterbridge's work speaks more broadly to conditions of the self.

—Kay Whitney

NAPA, CALIFORNIA

Robert Kinmont di Rosa

Robert Kinmont's recent one-person show, "Trying to Understand Where I Grew Up," was a mini-retrospective with works from his early years in the 1970s through pieces created as recently last year. Kinmont, one of the California Conceptualists, rose to prominence in the '70s, then dropped out of the art world in the '80s and, for about 20 years, studied Buddhism and made his living as a

carpenter. Around 2000, he returned to making sculpture, and he still lives and works in Sonoma, California—an important factor for work that explores the peculiarities of place and the human relationship with nature.

"Trying to Understand Where I Grew Up" evoked the very particular landscape around Bishop, on the eastern side of California, about halfway between Yosemite and Death Valley. It's cowboy country—rough scrabble ranches and desolate high desert—where you can see for miles, with the Eastern Sierra Mountains towering on the horizon. It's California, but a world away from San Francisco or Los Angeles and not a usual postcard destination. There are few people (maybe 1500), but lots of expanse—wide-open space, big skies, dirt, stones, scraggly trees, and desert plants. Some of Kinmont's sculptures are taken literally from the landscape. He presents dirt and stones, along with dry twigs and branches in wooden boxes, hollowed-out logs, and metal trays. In *Life is full of water and mistakes* (2014), a long thin copper box is filled to the brim with very dry and unfertile looking dirt and gravel. In another box work (1974–75), a plain pine box contains willow sticks and sage.

Kinmont's sculpture is very mixed media, making use of materials such as lumber, tree branches, feathers, copper, stones, broken glass, water, metal, dirt, and text. *Source Support*, a sculptural installation from 1971–73, consists of wood, copper, and

water. Kinmont sometimes carves pithy sentences into the wood or shapes thin copper tubing to spell them out. His works make language and form inextricable. In the wall installation *127 Willow Forks (This is Who I Am)* broken and forked twigs almost look like Chinese calligraphy. Other installations, such as *Listen* (2013), resemble bulletin boards, with random postings, sketches, and photographs. The pithy titles add some wry humor and food for thought.

Kinmont's work reminded me somehow of Bruce Nauman (a contemporary who also studied, lived, and worked in California for many years), particularly the neon works. Kinmont's sculptures have that same dry humor. He also does not confine himself to sculpture, working in photography, performance, film, and video—all represented in this retrospective. His photographs—usually a set of straightforward black and white prints—vividly illustrate his sculptural sensibilities, as well as his way with words. In *Just about the right size*, a set of nine silver gelatin prints from 1970, Kinmont stands in a frontal pose holding a variety of common objects, manmade and natural, all just about the right size to fit comfortably in your hands.

Kinmont's carpentry experience and love of fine woodworking can be seen in the sculptures, though they are more conceptual and scrappy than crafty. Another box work, *Sit on the floor* (1971), is beautifully crafted of cherry wood; it sits on the floor

Above left: Robert Kinmont, *127 Willow Forks (This is Who I Am)*, 2010. Willow, pine, birch plywood, and maple, 84 x 153 x 45 in. **Above:** Robert Kinmont, *Sit on the floor*, 1971. Cherry wood and sage, 6.75 x 23.75 x 23.5 in.

holding a bunch of dry sage sticks. This delightfully appealing and thought-provoking exhibition, organized by di Rosa curator Amy Owen, was a perfect fit for the industrial aesthetic of the Gatehouse Gallery at di Rosa.

—Jane Ingram Allen

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

Doug and Mike Starn

Princeton University Art Museum

Standing nearly 18 feet tall and weighing eight tons, Doug and Mike Starn's luminous outdoor installation (*Any*) *Body Oddly Propped* continues their preoccupation with dendritic growth and sunlight, while adding a weightiness not previously seen in their work. Seven tremendous steel frames hold vividly colored glass panels etched with silhouettes of tree branches that form networks akin to veins or synapses. The massive rectangles, like deconstructed architecture, are propped diagonally against one another; two are held up (or rather seem to be) by spindly cast-bronze tree limbs. The richly hued glass, translucent and layered with imagery, catches and filters the light, while allowing surrounding trees and sky to show through. One can walk in and around the piece,