

WOODSTOCK TIMES

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Unspooling the clues

ONE-WOMAN SHOW OF WORKS BY DEVORAH SPERBER
OPENS THIS THURSDAY AT UCCC IN STONE RIDGE

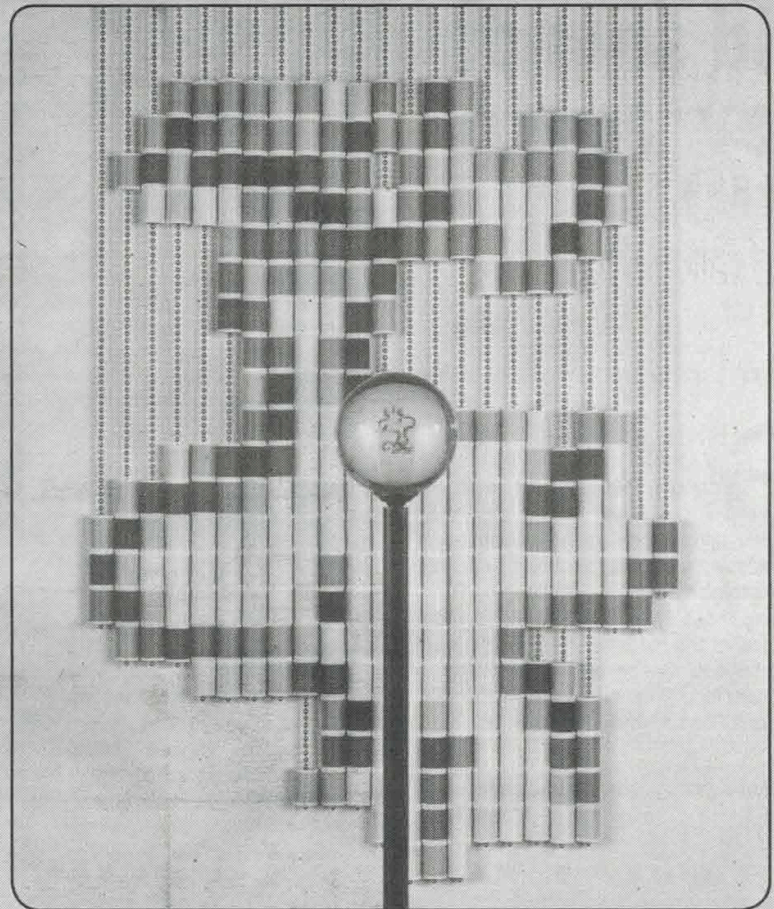
Devorah Sperber's work betrays her background in an engineering family, her scientific interests, her marriage to a doctor. But it also signals an undying playfulness, an almost-childlike sense of wonder, alongside a scholarly appreciation of the entirety of art history – plus a sparkling pop wit. A show of her works, "Sperber: Gone to the Dogs," will be on display at SUNY-Ulster's Muroff-Kotler Gallery on the Stone Ridge

campus this Thursday, March 17 through April 15, with a talk by the artist on the day of the opening.

Sperber is known for her optical-illusion works. She makes walls of colored thread spools, hung obliquely, that coalesce into exact replicas of great masterpieces when seen through special prisms or mirrors from afar. She has created Volkswagen buses out of shower curtains, *Star Trek* "beam-me-up, Captain" pods and now such pieces as her latest, *Woodstock*: a big swirl of yellow that coalesces into the Peanuts bird character when seen just so. Wow.

"My current body of work consists of sculptures assembled from thousands of ordinary objects: spools of thread, marker and pen caps, Flower Power stickers, map tacks, chenille stems (a/k/a pipecleaners), faceted beads and Swarovski crystals. The imagery is derived from digital photographs that I manipulate and translate into 'low-tech' pixels," the artist says of her truly unique and smart-as-a-whip oeuvre. "While many contemporary artists employ digital technology to create high-tech works, I strive to 'dumb-down' technology by using mundane materials and low-tech, labor-intensive assembly processes. I place equal importance on the recognizable image as a whole and on how individual parts function as abstract elements. Therefore, I select materials based on their aesthetic and functional characteristics as well as their capacity for an interesting and often contrasting relationship with the subject matter... This shift in perception functions as a mechanism to present the idea that there is no one truth or reality, thus emphasizing subjective reality over an absolute truth."

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DEVORAH SPERBER'S *WOODSTOCK*, 2010, 308 LARGER SPOOLS OF THREAD, STAINLESS-STEEL BALL CHAIN AND HANGING APPARATUS, CLEAR ACRYLIC SPHERE, METAL STAND, DIMENSIONS: 38" X 29" (THREAD ONLY) X 60"D (VIEWING SPHERE)

Sperber, whose exhibitions have included shows at Mass MoCA and a one-person exhibition, "The Eye of the Artist: The Work of Devorah Sperber," at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, shares time between New York City and Woodstock. She will be serving as visiting artist to the Community College this spring.

There will be an Artist Talk by Devorah Sperber – a charming explainer of her work and of contemporary art practice – at 7 p.m. this Thursday, March 17 in the Student Lounge of Vanderlyn Hall on the SUNY-Ulster campus. A reception will follow. For more about the Muroff-Kotler Visual Arts Gallery and this show, call (845) 687-5000 or visit www.sunyulster.edu.

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