

Abigail Maxey
Artist-in-Residence at Shoreline Art Cottage
Early September – early November 2020

Final Report

The first few days of my residency I spent walking around and exploring the grounds. From my first visit to the park, I knew I wanted to create something for the beach. Meanwhile wildfires raged across the West and the smoke made it unsafe to go outside, my thoughts turned to the trees that were being destroyed. I started weaving these tall cylinders that represented tree trunks to me.

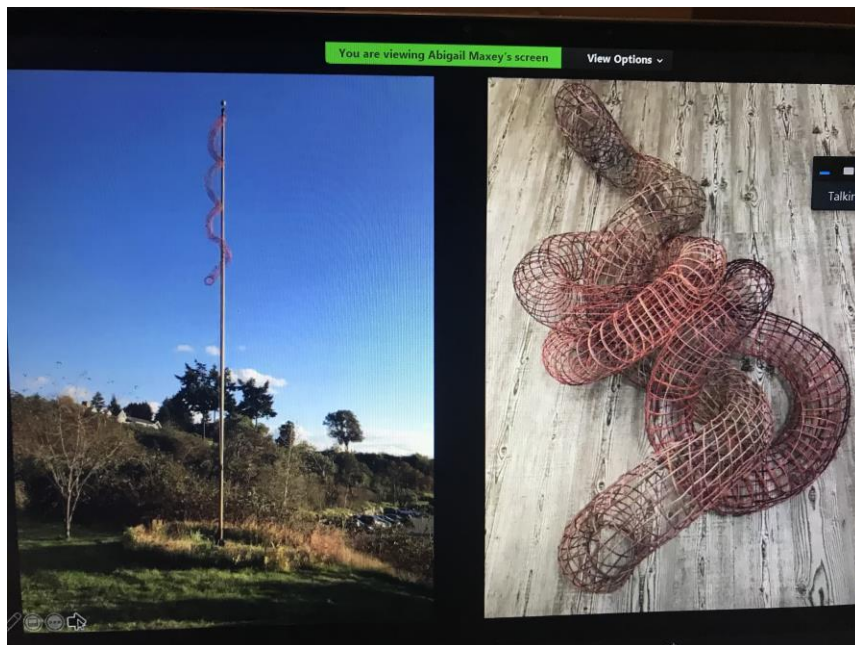


Creating a straight woven structure and getting them to support themselves upright was a challenge. What if I installed them over the pylons, old deteriorating logs, at low tide. They would 'float' upright in the water at high tide. A memorial to trees.

I was also inspired by a couple of trees outside the studio window which had beautiful red leaves and the first sculpture I created was a piece to wind around those branches. As the leaves quickly fell, the reds in the woven piece became the adornment, adding color, to the bare tree.



I also experimented with different ways to display the red spiral: I ran it up the flag pole and wound it around the roots of the tree on the beach.



The final project I created were two large open-weave baskets. These baskets were designed to be placed in the water to gather whatever floated by. The idea was to catch seaweed that would dry and become part of the basket. The shapes of the baskets were designed to reflect the water environment.

At low tide on Saturday, October 24, I installed my creations. It was a gorgeous sunny day, with wind and whitecaps. I created three cylinders, two were installed upright, the final one strung between two pylons like a fallen log. The baskets were anchored with rocks. The red spiral was attached to a pylon where it bobbed in the water like an oversized tangle of seaweed. By high tide, only the tops of the upright cylinder trees were visible. I watched as one basket floated south, too far out to retrieve. As the tide receded, it exposed the sections of the woven material where seaweed attached itself leaving a visible record of the high tide marks. The submerged cylinder was completely covered creating a whole new texture. I am letting these pieces dry out with the seaweed attached. The red spiral was recovered with very little seaweed but with changes to the form. The regular patterns of the weave distorted by the force of the waves.





I started working with reed several years ago. I love the weaving process as it allows me the freedom to abstractly react to different environments including open fields, trees and now, thanks to this residency, water. I use round reed in an open weave pattern tied with waxed linen to reinforce the connecting joints. The process allows me to create lightweight yet surprisingly strong structures. These characteristics contribute to my ability to install pieces in many situations and locations. I am free to interact with the gorgeous natural beauty and bring it into my work.

The residency has been a wonderful experience. A private oasis for creativity when I has few opportunities to get away and create. To be inspired by this unique natural environment and the wonderful view. The residency gave me the opportunity to try out new ideas and bring experimentation into the artistic process. I would like to recognize the City of Shoreline for the opportunity you have given me, thank you.

Abigail Maxey

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Photos: David Francis / field shots & Zoom screen shots