

# Brave New Swirl

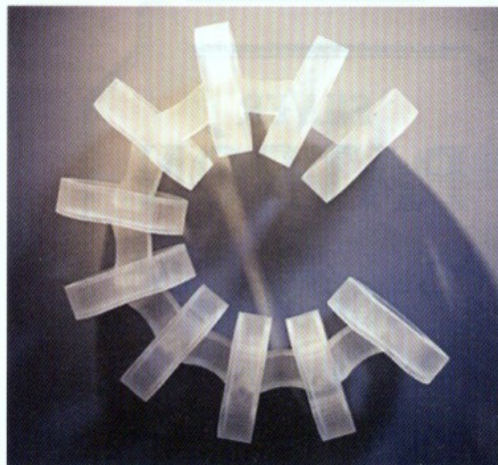
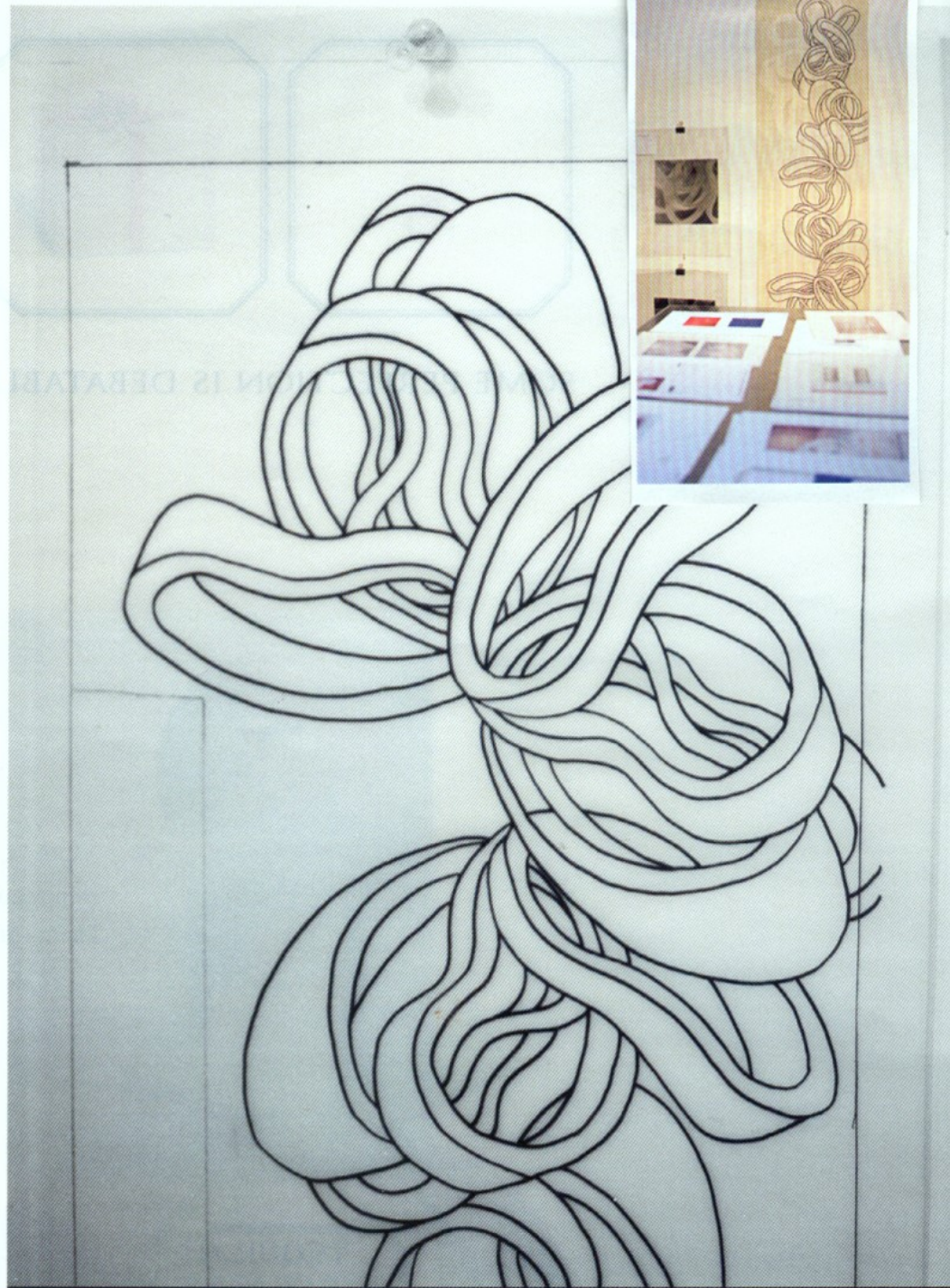
*The ordinary bean as art?  
For Dallas artist Joan Winter, nature is an endless source of inspiration*

| By Steve Carter | Photography by Trevor Paulbus |

"Nature has it all," Dallas artist Joan Winter tells me as we tour her Dallas studio. On some out-of-the-way shelves near her computer, along with family photos and miscellany, a small collection of some of her favorite objects is on display: sea shells, bird nests, a seed pod, leaves, the spiky fruit ball from a sycamore tree, all standing at the ready for a moment's inspiration. "I love the spiral," she continues. "Actually, I'm kind of fascinated with lots of different things. Here's a beautiful little shell—sculpture is really hard-pressed to top this, you know?" she laughs. Whether sculpting in wood or cast resin, creating multiple layered intaglio prints, or print-made paintings, Winter's work in each medium asks its own questions and finds its own solutions; her transitions from three dimensions to two, and back again, is artistic shapeshifting with an uncommon gracefulness.

*Counterpoint*, her recent solo exhibition of sculpture, multi-media prints and paintings at Holly Johnson Gallery, some of which are still on display this month, evinced an exploration of a stylized 'bean' form, so ubiquitous a design element that it felt essential, archetypal. "What is happening is a very simple vocabulary, then building on it, looking at it in different ways," she explains. "How do you combine it, how do you make it intertwine, how do you weave it so that it has different voices?"

Joan Winter's first career was in interior architecture, specializing in space planning and design; she graduated from Texas Tech in 1969 with her Bachelor's in Art and Design. On returning to her native Fort Worth afterwards, she started working at the firm of renowned architect Preston M. Geren. At the time, Geren was Associate Architect for Louis Kahn's Kimbell Art Museum, then under construction. The then 23-year-old Winter had a chance to observe Kahn at close range, and the experience was life-changing. "You could tell that he was a step apart, that he had that sense about him," she recalls. "I just love that space even now. All that glass, and the natural light, the way the light's filtered in—the Kimbell's just incredible." CONTINUED...



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*Clockwise from top: Rise and Fall suite. Artist Joan Winter. Between Light and Shadow.*

