



JASON MIDDLEBROOK: *BEG, STEAL OR BORROW; it's nature that takes the blame*

May 5 - June 13, 2016

Artist's Reception: Thursday, May 5th, 7 - 9PM

Artist's remarks at 8PM

von Auersperg Art Gallery, Deerfield Academy, Deerfield, Massachusetts

The von Auersperg Gallery in the Hess Center for the Arts at Deerfield Academy is pleased to present *Beg, Steal or Borrow; it's nature that takes the blame*. Curated by Adrienne Ruger Conzelman P'16 P'18, the exhibition features the celebrated Plank series of artist Jason Middlebrook, based in Columbia County, NY. Opening on Thursday, May 5, 2016, with an artist's reception from 7 to 9pm, the exhibition will be on view through Reunion weekend, closing June 13. Coinciding with Spring Family weekend, a student-led tour of the exhibition will be offered at 10am on Saturday, May 7th with additional tours to follow throughout the remainder of the school year.

For over a decade, Jason Middlebrook has transformed discarded trunks of maple, walnut, cherry and cottonwood trees into intricate geometric and often psychedelic, sculptural paintings. Some soar vertically to twenty feet, while others are more contained wall pieces, which expose the cross-sections of the grain in a more direct manner. Sourcing his material from a Massachusetts mill, Middlebrook selects both his planks and wall pieces for their beautiful, distinct forms and edges, which he masterfully incorporates into the overlaid painted design.

Considered one of today's most socially responsible artists, Middlebrook draws inspiration from the wide-ranging fields of ecology, art history, geography and politics. Reviewing a current exhibition of Middlebrook's planks in San Francisco, Dewitt Cheng offers this perspective: "Middlebrook addresses the "collision between man and nature," a trope usually treated with glum, heavy-handed political correctness and makes the synthesis of opposites a joyous, radiant melding of complementaries—a sly collusion, rather, from an artist interested in ecology, recycling and entropy—and the imagined fate of art objects in a post-anthropoc era." (*artltd*. May/June 2016, v.10, No. 3)

Jason Middlebrook's work has been featured extensively at many institutions across the country including a yearlong retrospective at MASS MoCA in North Adams, Massachusetts in 2013. Middlebrook's work is in the permanent collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, The New Museum in New York, the Denver Art Museum, the Addison Gallery of American Art, among others.

ARC Fine Art is located at 3113 Bronson Road in Fairfield, Connecticut and is open by appointment. Further inquiries, please contact Adrienne Ruger Conzelman at 203 895 9595.