

**“Making It Up,” essay by curators David Finn and Victor Faccinto for brochure for Making It Up show at Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC, 1999**

**Making It Up**

Making It Up exhibits the work of four artists who use improvisation along with a palette of everyday materials, including fabric, fruit, sponges, papier mache, wood, paint, etc. in the process of making up their work. The materials in themselves are not exotic, often tried and true, but like the use of the saxophone in jazz, unquestionably right for the creation of the sculpture.

The first impression we often have of spontaneous passages in jazz or visual art is that they are formless, haphazard. It is only when one becomes more familiar with the work that form and discipline are apparent. Yet spontaneity and improvisations that look or sound good are often the result of lots of practice and hard work. Craft must be mastered, even if it is subverted. Decisions to rework or accept riffs and passages are continually made and remade during the creative process. Finding the right material or the exact way to work with it may take months or years of experimentation.

Utilizing the accidental, the informal, the offhand is a talent shared by these four artists. **From Drew Shiflett’s sublime orchestration of everyday stuff** to Susanna Starr’s experiments with huge pools of paint on giant sponges; from Ava Gerber’s fragile evocations of self, to Jeffrey Gurecka’s meditations on decay, the artists in Making It Up are all masters of the illusion of spontaneity.

**Exhibition Curators David Finn Victor Faccinto**