



Art: *Fingerspan*

Site: Wissahickon Park

Place: Fairmount Park

Location: Philadelphia, PA

Artist: Jody Pinto



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Public art hidden in the deep woods may be an oxymoron, but this is one installation worth finding. An unusual covered bridge shaped like an index finger, it rests on a rocky escarpment, stretching across a crevasse that interrupts the flow of a narrow path high above the

Wissahickon Creek. The finger form has a perfect bend in harmony with the contours of the geography. Plus, it is a finger-pointing, wayfinding marker – evidence that humans have been here and that humans are allowed here (perhaps since the Original People forged the trails). Besides, the finger is not unlike that in the Creation depicted on the Sistine Chapel ceiling, a bit of spirituality about the natural world. There is the contrast of the steel, albeit perforated, with the stone ledges interspersed with woody plant growth: not necessarily a combination one would think compatible. But two things happen with the structure – because

of its see-through walls and floors, it allows the natural world in (as much as is safely possible), and its rusty patina makes it appear almost as old as the formations it spans. Like a barnacle on a whale, there is a synchronicity of the object and its site – literally, the human hand on the land, and a metaphor for our impact in all interactions with our world. This is one with a happy result, though: functionally meaningful in allowing safe crossing of an otherwise impassable cliff face; not obtrusive nor overbearing; and providing an added bonus of focusing the eye on its amazing environment while having a bit of fun in the process.

Impact:

- Context/contrast
 - Scale
 - Experiential
- Integrated in setting
 - Color
 - Figurative

Art-to-Site Rating: High

View Date: November 2009



Sculpturehead

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