

Sonoma Index-Tribune

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The Sonoma Valley Museum of Art's latest outdoor art exhibit opens June 8 and several of the works were installed on the Plaza Tuesday morning, June 5. The exhibit, "*Natural Affinity: California Women Sculptors in the Landscape*," features the works of Gwynn Murrill, Alison Saar and Lisa Reinertson.

The museum invites the public to a celebration of public art and picnic in the Sonoma Plaza on Friday, June 8 at 5:30 p.m. "BYOP (bring your own picnic) and we'll bring the wine!," said museum Executive Director Linda Keaton. The reception will take place in the southeast corner of Sonoma Plaza, with remarks from the museum, the city, and artists starting at 5:30 p.m., followed by Sonoma Valley Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting.



In a proposal reviewed by the City Council in March, Keaton pitched – and the council unanimously supported – a second season of “conceptually rich artworks that will encourage public dialogue and engagement.”

“Natural Affinity: California Women Sculptors in the Landscape” – an exhibition featuring, according to the museum, “a shared concern for the natural world as well as human-animal interests concerning friendship, love and the parent-child bond.”

“The fact that it’s California artists and they’re all women ... I’m thrilled,” said Sonoma City Councilmember Rachel Hundley earlier this spring when the council approved the use of the Plaza for the exhibit.

Murrill’s life-scaled sculptures are achingly smooth wood-block studies in human and animal “form” – she specializes in fauna that inhabit the California countryside. Los Angeles-based Saar’s themes are conveyed in sculptures using recognizably human forms. Her sculptures are born from both traditional and found materials and she often focuses on works related to femininity and the African diaspora. Working extensively in bronze, Reinertson describes her art as having “an underlying humanism,” representing everything from animal forms of the natural world to public sculptures of historic figures from the peace and social justice movements.

The exhibit runs through Oct. 21.