

THE RIVERTOWNS Enterprise

The Hometown
of Hastings-on-
Dobbs Ferry, Ar
and Irvington

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SPOTLIGHT ON THE ARTS

In small works, Gilbert shapes larger vision

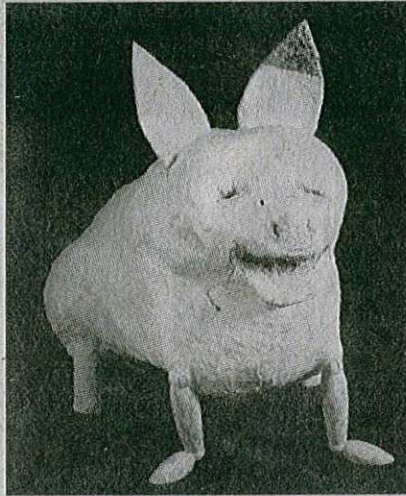
By Sylvia O'Hagan

Primitive forms, among them a young girl, a hyena, and two indeterminate figures bearing the title "Birth Certificate," are part of the eight sculptures by Ruth Gilbert showing at SoHo20Chelsea, a Manhattan gallery, through Sept. 26.

Gilbert has been a Hastings resident for more than 40 years, after being raised in Hartford, Conn., and living in the Riverdale section of the Bronx. She and her husband, the late Dr. Myron Gilbert, moved to Riverdale for its proximity to Montefiore Hospital, where Dr. Gilbert was on staff. The couple raised three sons in Hastings — Martin, Daniel, and the late Billy Gilbert. Martin Gilbert has settled in the Rivertowns, in Irvington with his wife, Naomi Gilbert, an art teacher at Hastings High School, along with two of Gilbert's four grandchildren.

Art has always been a passion of Gilbert's, she recalls, something she always remembers doing. "I was into art from the time I could hold a crayon," Gilbert recalls. "I was always the class artist." She received a bachelor of arts degree from the Rhode Island School of Design and a master of arts from the City College of New York, with the intention of teaching as well as doing art.

Teaching art early in her career in Connecticut and Long Island elementary schools, Gilbert said it was frustrating to her that she was not able to work with the children often and build a relationship with them. "I saw them just



Two of Ruth Gilbert's maquettes on display at SoHo20Chelsea.

once a week; it was hard to get to know them, their names... I thought it would be nice to be in the position where I could get to know the children better," Gilbert says. She returned to school to get a master's in guidance and counseling, receiving her degree while expecting her first child.

When her children were small, Gilbert stayed home with them and had little time for her art. But once they started school, she began to work in a darkroom in the basement of their home. "I was making big prints, all types of alternative processes and manipulations including sun prints and kallitypes," Gilbert says. Her very first exhibit was at the Hudson River Museum.

After her sons went to college, Gilbert worked as a guidance counselor in the New York City schools for six years. "During the summers I worked on my photography, but I found I really wanted more time to devote to it," Gilbert notes.

The time came when Gilbert decided to devote herself full time to being a working artist, and have a studio in which space would not be an issue, as it was in her home. "My pieces started getting larger and larger; I needed more room," Gilbert says.

Fifteen years ago, Gilbert moved her studio space to YoHo, the former factory

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Gilbert

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space on Nepperhan Avenue in Yonkers now converted to artists' studios. "It's been wonderful," said Gilbert of her time at the YoHo studios. "You can stop what you're doing, and leave the mess behind. Then there's also the social aspect of it. I've made wonderful friends, great relationships."

Working in her studio space over the years, Gilbert has segued from photography manipulations to mixed medium art pieces to her recent maquettes, the sculptures currently on exhibit. "The sculpture has been a part of my painting for a long time — my oil and canvas pieces had three-dimensional pieces ... I would often add something, like an arm, leg, wings," Gilbert says. "In the last few years, I started making total sculptures."

Gilbert said her interest in sculpting was heightened after viewing exhibits at

the Guggenheim and Whitney museums featuring Kiki Smith and Louise Bourgeois. "I just fell in love with their work, was inspired by it... there are a lot of people whose work I just adore," notes Gilbert, adding that she is a lifelong art consumer and follower.

The reason her exhibit is called "Maquettes for Public Sculpture," she explains, is that she would like to see the pieces enlarged into public installations, the type found in public spaces like parks or pavilions. "Some of the pieces would look great enlarged — there are professional studios that do that type of work," Gilbert says. "I would just love that."

Gilbert's first exhibit at the Chelsea gallery, which promotes the work of women artists, was in 2006. That exhibit highlighted Gilbert's oil-on-canvas paintings.

Gilbert says that after the exhibit closes, she plans on doing something different, maybe painting. "Putting together an exhibit takes you away from the art... I am really looking forward to starting a

new body of work," Gilbert says. "I think I may want to paint... that's the nice thing about being an artist — you can do whatever you want!"

"Maquettes for Public Sculpture" is on view through Saturday, Sept. 26, at SoHo20 Chelsea, 511 West 25th St., New York, NY 10001. For more information, call (212) 367-8994 or visit www.sohogallery20.com.

RUTH GILBERT



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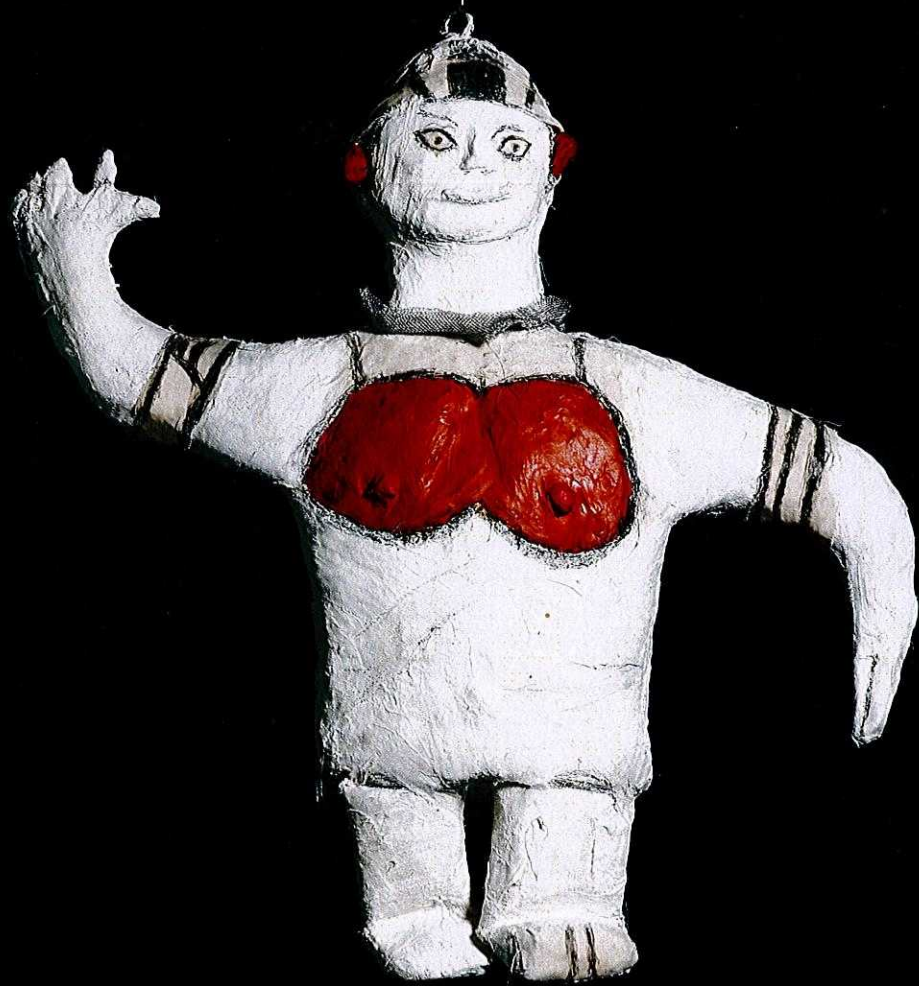
Maquette for large scale sculpture, *Wedding Dress for an Older Bride*, 2009, plaster, canvas, pencil, lace

sculpture

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Ruth Gilbert

Maquettes
for public sculpture

SOHO20
C H E L S E A

511 West 25th Street, Suite 605
New York, NY 10001
212 367 8994
Tues - Sat 12-6 pm

Tuesday, September 1 -
Saturday, September 26

Opening Receptions

Thursday, September 3, 5 to 7 pm
Saturday, September 5, 2 to 5 pm

FRONT: "Young Girl", designed as a hanging sculpture,
33"H x 33"W x 5"D
plastercraft, plasticine, canvas, pencil, 2009.

INSIDE LEFT: "Woman", from a petroglyph,
33"H x 34"W x 1½"D
plastercraft, wood, wire, oil paint, gold leaf, 2009.

INSIDE RIGHT: "Birth Certificate", from a petroglyph,
designed as a hanging sculpture,
73"H x 46"W x 2½"D
plastercraft, 2009.

BACK: "Hyena",
20"H x 14"W x 16"D,
plastercraft, wood armature, gold leaf, 2009.