



Dove Bradshaw, *Herself In The Element*, 2002/05 Photogravure

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### Works that get back to nature

Each of four women featured in the "Elements" exhibit at the Abington Art Center has long focused on linking art with science, paying particular attention to nature and its processes. Now in this show we see each of them individually carrying out a project relating to one of the elements - earth, air, fire, water - or combining them.

Dove Bradshaw steals the show with work outstanding in its unforced poise, richness and subtlety. Bradshaw's subject, the earth, seems to come to us out of a dream, out of glass flasks of elements like carbon, hydrogen, calcium in a science lab (and on view at the exhibit), or out of the distant past. And yet her works have all the immediacy and drama of the present, as best seen in the striking photogravure *Herself in the Element*.

An appealing costume displaying names of all the elements in the human body is a reminder that the gifted Bradshaw designed Merce Cunningham Dance Company sets and costumes for 10 years.

Stacy Levy speaks to us in a clear, cool whisper, using a floor-spread of simple, fan-blown, fluttering paper tabs

to emphasize the changing, programmed air currents as we navigate this room.

Jackie Brookner (earth/water) opts for slightly surreal edginess served up with visual gusto in work fluctuating between folk sources and expressionistic taste. Her most elaborate piece uses live plants (papyrus) and goldfish. It's nature-related in ways that make aesthetic standards seem irrelevant.

That's truer still of Eve Andree Laramee's water/fire focus, as she examines the environmental legacy of New Mexico since the development of atomic weapons at Los Alamos. Somehow, a weepy sadness clings to Laramee's substantial, very detailed presentation of those charts and maps.

This is an unusually interesting and provocative display, as it articulates the tension between very varied positions of art-making with elements.

*Abington Art Center, 515 Meetinghouse Rd., Jenkintown. To Nov. 22.  
Tue.-Fri. 10-5, Thu. to 7, Sat. 10-3. Free. 215-887-4882.*