

# site-specific installation artist

By bringing inner and outer together, Hutchinson creates some unique art.

## She's a



(Left) Hutchinson utilizes her interest in environmental issues to create the unique forms. She points out that no two pieces are the same and that each art form is built "site-specifically." (Right) Hutchinson's art features long cocoon-shaped forms made of paper clay and various woven materials that reflect the ecological properties of their location.



environment and the order of nature through her unique skills.

Her work features long cocoon-shaped forms made of paper clay and various woven materials that reflect the ecological properties of their location. Hutchinson utilizes her inter-

"The outer and inner are coming together and I'm building a responsive piece."

That's how Rebecca Hutchinson describes her work.

Hutchinson, a 1984 alumna, returned to Berea March 30 to share her unique art form with the campus. For years, this Richmond, Va., sculptor has visited locations throughout the country enhancing the public's perceptions of the

est in environmental issues to create unique, unusual forms.

"No two pieces are the same, each is built site-specifically," she commented.

Hutchinson refers to herself as a "site-specific installation artist." She combines the information she has

By Zak Pence, '02, Public Relations News Services

Clinton Hines is going to Harvard this summer, thanks in part to Emmy-award-winning actor Anthony Zerbe.

It seems Zerbe (pronounced Zer-bee) made Hines an offer he couldn't refuse.

Hines, a junior theater and math major from Batavia, Ohio, will attend the Harvard Summer School program in Dramatic Arts, and Zerbe is helping to pay his expenses.

The Berea student was shocked when Zerbe offered to help with his travel expenses to Boston. Best known for his numerous roles in films such

## Hines is going to Harvard

# Thanks to some help from Anthony Zerbe

By Ann Mary Quarandillo



Zerbe (left) and Browne performed at the Jelkyl Drama center in March.

as Cool Hand Luke, Rooster Cogburn, and Star Trek IX, Zerbe was on campus in March with fellow actor Roscoe Lee Browne performing "Behind the Broken Words," a production of 20th-century poetry and drama. After the performance, Zerbe and Browne met with Berea

theater majors.

Zerbe asked the students what steps they were taking to become actors, and was not surprised when

gathered onsite with her life experience and integrates both into each piece she makes. She has visited many areas around the country, studying ecological systems and the architectural designs of people in



*Art students help shape one of the forms that were displayed in the Traylor Art Gallery.*

these regions in an attempt to discover why animals and people interact with their environments the way they do. Close attention is also paid to the nesting habits of the wildlife.

“I’m looking at how people make decisions to develop,” Hutchinson explained. “For me, studying and observing the natural environment provides rich and diverse metaphors.”

Hutchinson’s work involves a variety of methods and techniques. Working with adobe, she combines the techniques of weaving and wattle and daub (a type of stucco method). While every installation is unique, she uses some similar process to make each piece. Warp structures are built with bent willow saplings and upholsterer’s threads gathered at the ends, then anchored at one end to the ceiling. After collecting various materials from the surrounding area (downed tree limbs and a large mass of indigenous grasses at Berea), she dips them in a paper clay mixture and weaves them through the long vertical strands of thread. She then adds more layers of paper clay as needed for extra strength and durability.

The artist’s use of paper clay adds solidity and strength to the structures she builds. Similar to nest structures made by a variety of birds and the substances used by indigenous people

throughout the world to build their dwelling places, a high content of cellulose fiber mixed with clay increases strength and durability to the unfired form. She developed her technique for making paper clay through much experimentation, typically using a mixture of reconstituted paper pulp and porcelain clay.

Hutchinson received a B.A. in ceramics at Berea, before attaining her M.F.A. at the University of Georgia in 1987. Now an assistant professor at Virginia Commonwealth University, she believes the strong tradition of artisanship at Berea influenced her path to being an artist.

During the Berea installation, Hutchinson paid careful attention to the dynamics of the space in which she was building—the lower Traylor Gallery in the College art building and the surrounding environment. Not only did she discover a variety of native grasses, invasive plant life and carefully constructed animal dwellings, but she also drew ideas from working closely in collaboration with Berea students.

Several art students assisted Hutchinson in the installation process. They helped her collect the grass and limbs, research the area and weave three site-specific long structures. The sculptures were completed April 4 and

many students said school seemed like a waste of time when they could be out acting. He dispelled that notion quickly.

“He said we needed to stay in school to gain more experience,” Hines commented. “And if we stayed in school, he said he’d help anyone participate in programs offering professional acting experience. So, I raised my hand.”

Hines already was planning to attend Harvard’s drama workshops, but he was concerned about the high price for tuition, room and board. Berea’s Discovery Fund is providing some help and he has taken a loan for the balance of the costs. When he Summer 2000

received the check from Zerbe and Poetry in Motion, it gave him a boost, both financially and in confidence.

“Meeting Anthony Zerbe made it



*Hines was featured in “Twelfth Night,” the final Theatre Lab production of the season. He doubts that he would have started acting had it not been for “the encouraging atmosphere at Berea.”*

real for me that I could actually do this,” he said.

Hines praises Berea for giving him opportunities like meeting Zerbe and his partner, the Emmy-award winning Browne, which bring him one step closer to his goal of becoming a professional actor. He credits Dr. Alycia Vince-Howard, the College’s theater director, with inspiring him to “go ahead and act” and helping him become the actor he is today.

“I don’t think I’d have even started acting if it had not been for the encouraging atmosphere at Berea and people like Dr. Vince-Howard,” he said.

At Harvard, Hines will participate in workshops on character develop-