

RAMON ALCOLEA

Ramon Alcolea is represented by the Schoolhouse Gallery, 494 Commercial St., Provincetown, gallerieschoolhouse.com. His open studio, at 2 Brown St., Provincetown, will be held September 8-9.

It's a busy time in Ramon Alcolea's studio. Already a high-energy person who works on several projects at once, he now has one more significant undertaking added to his schedule. He is preparing for an open studio of his work in September, in collaboration with the Schoolhouse Gallery, to commemorate 30 years of being an artist living and working in Provincetown.

Upon entering his studio, work from two of his popular series, "Provincetown Notes" and "Provincetown Found," is displayed neatly at the entrance. But directly opposite is a worktable strewn with bits of wood and all manner of tools and parts needed to construct one of his art pieces. To Alcolea, one does not use the verb "construct" lightly, because he is a student and disciple of the Constructivism School of New York, which came out of the original Russian movement. The New York school is a lot more playful and whimsical than its Russian forebear, and Alcolea's mature, controlled pieces are fantastic, accessible examples of the school.



Alcolea uses found objects to construct his art, pieces of wood and minutiae, both organic and inorganic, that he accumulates and hoards in his studio. "Any piece of wood, any object, that I feel might be good or interesting, I grab," he says. His work is about form and mass. Color, shape and organization also play dominant roles. And all of his pieces are titled. "The title comes from the world of the artist," he explains. "Something untitled creates a gap in the information, and looking at art is hard enough." His titles are poetic—like "The Push and Pull of the Moon" and "The Moon and the Snail"—adding depth and another dimension to the visual experience.

"Provincetown Notes" are small pieces in which the material narrates a story, and unlike his other work, they utilize a traditional frame. "The frame keeps me focused, but also, 'Provincetown Notes' need the frame to contain them because they're so small," he says.

For his "Provincetown Found" series, he uses wood that he has collected over the past 20 years, all stored in his studio—against the wall, in the rafters, under the floor. He eschews a frame, allowing the material to dictate the ebb and flow of the work, as his artistry lies in where the piece begins and ends. In this series, Alcolea looks at how the pieces relate to each other to bring about order and balance. "It's about control," he says. "The viewer is experiencing the piece, and how do I continue to keep the viewer interested?" —*John Greiner-Ferris*

Opposite, top: "The wave and the moon"
8" x 11" x 3" • Mixed media

Opposite, bottom: "A sea garden III"
18.5" x 22" x 2" • Wood wall construction

Below: "Black magic"
15" x 14" x 5" • Wood wall construction



Top: "Memento Mori"
24" x 29" x 6" • Wood wall construction

Above: "A sea boneyard"
19" x 19" x 2.5" • Wood wall construction

Left: "A Corinthian princess I"
17" x 23" x 2" • Wood wall construction