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SPORTS



Wrestling rout
in Southington

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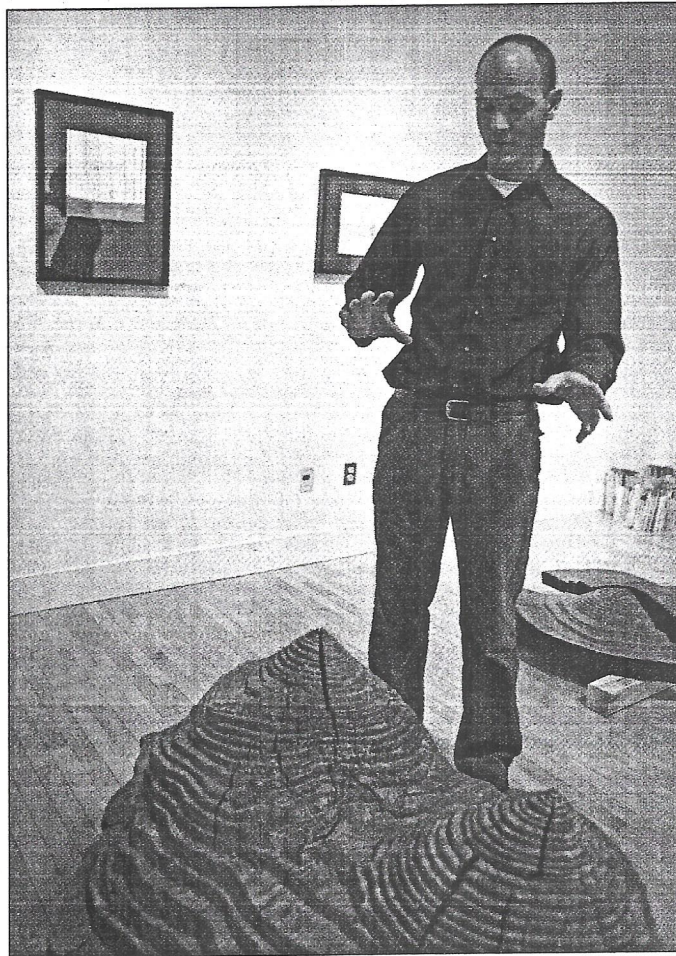
MONEY

More students
taking personal
finance courses

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Chris Richie / Staff

Artist Matthew Weber shows his exhibit "Mass as Form" at Tunxis Community College.

Knocking on wood

Timber sculptures are
on display at Tunxis

By JENNIFER ABEL
STAFF WRITER

FARMINGTON — A famous sculptor was once asked how he created his art, and he said he took a chunk of marble and chipped away everything that didn't look like a statue.

The implication was that the image was already hidden in the medium, just waiting for someone to bring it out.

Unionville sculptor Matthew Weber took the idea to heart in his exhibit "Mass as Form," on display at the Barnes-Franklin Gallery of Tunxis Community College through Feb. 18. Weber attended the show's opening reception on Wednesday afternoon.

"So much of contemporary sculpture is about working with lines and consuming space," he said. "I'm working with material and visual weight."

There are a few drawings on the walls, of hedges, fences and stone walls, but most of the gallery is filled with Weber's wood carvings and "plywood grain drawings."

See more of Weber's
work on Page 20

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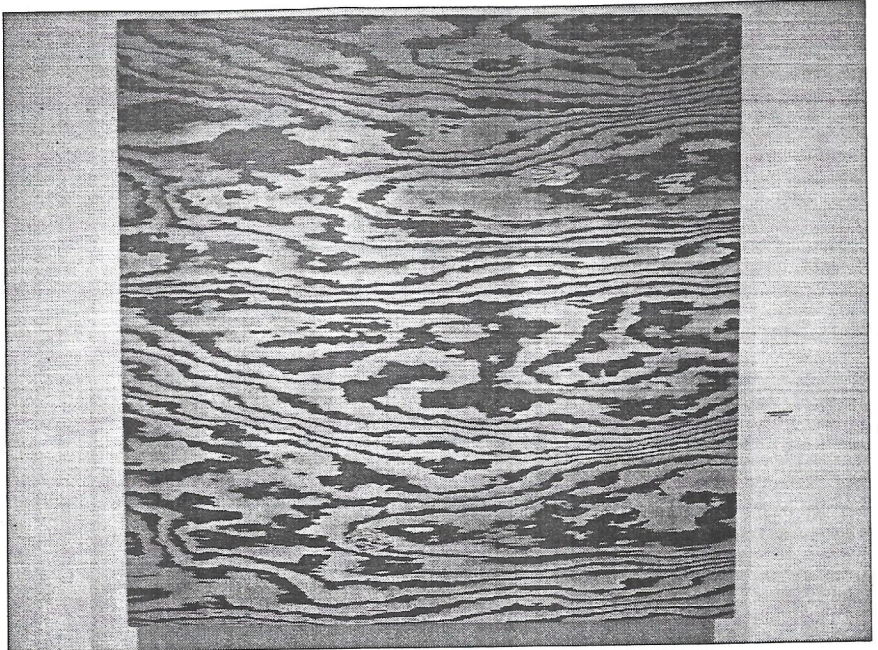


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Above, Artist Matthew Weber's "Small Grain Double Trace 3" on display at his solo exhibit "Mass as Form" at Tunxis Community College in Farmington. Right, his piece, "Plywood Grain Fill 09."

Chris Richie | Staff



Wood sculptures bring out the grain

Continued from Page 1

"They're coloring books," Weber said. "I take plywood with interesting grains and color them in. It's called 'grain fill.'"

The large wood carvings that dominate the gallery are carved to draw maximum attention to the tree-ring patterns of the wood. Several pieces, such as "Untitled Double Growth Ring Topography," resemble three-dimensional topographic maps of mountains.

"This was a giant piece of willow from the town recycling program, a log," Weber said. "I

start [carving] with the middle, pick a part and keep stepping it down." Weber uses "a chisel and a chainsaw" to shape the raw wood. The finished product has several random cracks up the sides of the "mountains."

"The wood is wet when I carve it, and that forms the cracks," he said. "If it's dry when I cut it with the chisel, the wood would tear instead of cut."

In addition to the pieces carved from single enormous pieces of wood, most so heavy Weber said he uses a small crane to suspend them while he carves them, there

are a few sculptures made of smaller wood pieces glued together. As Weber explained those pieces, he leaned against the stroller holding his sleeping almost 2-year-old son.

"This newer work is stuff I can make with children around," he said. "I can make the small pieces when they're not around, and put them together later."

Weber teaches art history and various art classes at Middlesex Community College; a few years ago he taught some courses at Tunxis, too. His work and family responsibilities do not keep him from his artwork, though the realities of working around small children have influenced his work.

"The newer works are glued together, and I'm starting to impose forms," he said. Sculptures such as "Large Cedar Cluster" are put together in ways that defy natural wood forms, rather than call attention to them as Weber's earlier pieces do.

Weber's works can be seen online at Matthewweber.net, and a subset of those works will be at the Barnes-Franklin Gallery at Tunxis Community College through Feb. 18. Gallery hours are 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, or by appointment.

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