

Day Tripper

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"The Gun Show"

by Amy Strauss

In 2005, Philadelphia artist Jane Irish organized an exhibit about Operation Rapid American Withdraw, a 1970 peace march led by Vietnam veterans. The detailed pieces in that show addressed what Irish thought soldiers might have been thinking amid a battlefield strewn with M16s, empty boots and battered helmets. The works, she says, celebrated the heroism of peacemaking — a kindred sentiment found at the Shore Institute's "The Gun Show."



Bucks County native Alan Powell, whose work will join Irish's in the Donna Gustafson-curated show, also tackles the imagery of power, self-reliance and self-preservation as it relates to America's weapon of choice, a staple in households and toy chests alike. Powell's enamel-on-sheet-metal 20mm recalls his upbringing in Fairmount, where the corner candy store became a midway point for drugs, rape and murder.

Since Americans stand on both sides of the gun argument, Gustafson says the exhibit is as anti-gun as it is pro-gun. Accompanying Irish's and Powell's commentaries are works by 13 other artists, including Jeff Hand, Claire Lieberman, Dot Paolo and Vilja Virks-Lee.

Runs through March 23, The Shore Institute of the Contemporary Arts, 20 Third Ave., Long Branch, N.J., 732-263-1121, www.sica.org