

## Artists find beauty in junk

By Alexis Cubit Hi-Desert Star

YUCCA VALLEY — Hi-Desert Nature Museum debuted its most recent art exhibit, “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle,” Friday evening and celebrated with a reception.

Artists and art lovers alike gathered to view the annually celebrated exhibit. This year, it was integrated with the “Desert Moods” exhibit and included a twist.

“Normally, we label each one that goes to each exhibit. But because they’re integrated, all the labels are the same,” said Vanessa Cantu, the museum registrar and exhibits coordinator. “We really want the art to speak for itself. There’s actually a lot of crossover. Some of the subject matter can be the same. It’s a good exhibit.”

Many of the art pieces used recycled material, but also could be construed as representing elements of the desert. One of the pieces, “Recycled Twigs & Branches” by John Van Vliet, is a photograph of twigs and branches formed in a manner that resembles a human walking.

“The artist’s intent was to have it entered for the ‘Reduce, Reuse, Recycle’ because the twigs, themselves, are recycled to make art,” Cantu explained. “But, it just so happens when you look at the photograph, it’s very moody.”

As museum-goers checked out the art, Mark Wheeler provided music to set the scene and a spread of various finger foods were available.

Artist Susan Abbott was also present for the exhibit reception Friday as her piece, “Gone Beyond,” was on display. The artwork was inspired by Buddhist teacher Ruth Denison, Abbot’s former landlord, who died last week. Abbott said Denison would often feed animals like rabbits where she lived, so many of showed up to her doorstep in search of a meal. Abbott decided to capture that and incorporated it in her piece.



As part of the "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" exhibit, artwork has been created using recycled items, as shown here.