

EXHIBITION ESSAY

Midnight Mass

*Written by Kathrine Page | Gretchen Hupfel Curator of Contemporary Art
at The Delaware Contemporary*

Working with the expansive industrial architecture of The Delaware Contemporary, Potsic strives to punctuate the height, scale, and proportion of the interior space. With over 250 linear feet of silk, Potsic has designed a monumental site-specific installation involving panels suspended on wires in the atrium plenum. The semi-translucent silk with photographic imagery of silhouetted tree branches weave and dance throughout the space in sweeping, graceful, abstract lines. By grafting the panels into the space and extending them from the entrance at a lower level and upward toward the clerestory windows, Potsic's work not only enhances the museum's architecture, but also affirms how art is intrinsically related to the existential human experience as viewers gaze at the billowing, twilight forest canopy overhead.

Potsic's work investigates the idea of woodland reveries surrounded by evocations of deciduous trees in winter, as though the landscape itself has been pulled from the earth and the nave at Midnight Mass replanted in the lobby. Like medieval basilicas that were designed to confer a cosmological concept of the dome of heaven, Potsic festoons her silk in single point perspective to conjure the grand processions during Midnight Mass. The sheer immediacy of the work evokes a sense of triumph and joy; the vast array of willowy draping in cobalt blue creates the illusion of a dome of heaven thus serving as a metaphor for celestial realms. Further, the dramatic sweeping arms symbolize a welcoming gesture for the viewer. As such, Potsic strives to awaken and nourish the divine mysteries of liturgical space. In its presence, her work challenges viewer's notion of a forest sanctuary as an invitation to contemplate the immensity and sublimity of nature and their place in it.

As an observer of the natural world, Potsic's composition of undulating elliptical arches rests within a hemispherical stage, which point to a global call for action. Her work is not only breathtakingly beautiful and enchanting but underscores the urgency of climate change and the need for environmental protections. By creating both a visceral and cerebral connection to trees and the natural world, Potsic's panoply of silk hold a double entendre: they offer a metaphorical protective covering, while drawing attention to universal deforestation and the loss of the earth's essential protective layer.