



Omi Announces Two 2015 Fall Exhibitions:  
*Linear Element: Alain Kirili and James Siena*  
*Reframing Nature: Allan Wexler*

**Opening Reception:** Sunday, October 11, 1:30 - 4 PM  
**“Journeys to Sculpture” Artist Talk:** Wednesday, October 21, 6:30 PM in NYC  
**On view:** October 11, 2015 - January 3, 2016

***For Immediate Release***

**Ghent, New York** - Omi International Arts Center announces its annual fall opening featuring two exhibitions at the Charles B. Benenson Gallery and Visitors Center. *Linear Elements* is a two person show focusing on recent sculptures and drawings by Alain Kirili and James Siena. Opening alongside this exhibition is *Reframing Nature*, featuring the work of Allan Wexler. Both exhibitions will host an opening reception on Sunday, October 11, from 1:30 - 4 PM and be on view through January 3, 2016. On Wednesday, October 21 at 6:30 PM, a dialogue between Alain Kirili and James Siena, moderated by David Cohen of *Art Critical*, will take place at the New York Studio School located at 8 W. 8th Street in New York City. All events are free and open to the public.

**The two person exhibition, *Linear Elements*, presents recent drawings and sculptures by Alain Kirili and James Siena.** Says exhibition curator Nicole Hayes, “the work of both Kirili and Siena use linear elements that, once assembled, take the shape of abstract forms and fields. These abstractions invite us to follow the artist’s line like a path, to take a journey connecting us to ancient places, old friends, books, songs, or moments the artist has lived.”

For the exhibition, Kirili exhibits a new series entitled *Iron Calligraphy*, which involves the creation of a large-scale wall installation comprised of hand forged iron rods. Working in the forge, Kirili bends, dents, and marks his iron with fire, vices and hammers – altering this rigid material into lyrical arcs, curves, and swaying lines. He will bring these elements into the gallery and arrange them “fa presto”, creating a 40 foot assemblage of linear characters alluding to a mysterious ancient language. In addition, Kirili will exhibit charcoal drawings which capture fleeting moments in charcoal lines on a smokey field.

James Siena exhibits his geometric, stream-of-consciousness forms created from bamboo skewers held together with glue and string. This new work is a continuation of a series the artist created from toothpicks assembled around grapevines which he originally made as gifts for friends in the mid 1980's. These works will be shown alongside patinated bronzes of the original series on a large scale that were created at The Walla Walla Foundry in Washington. Siena was able to realize these pieces in bronze when 3-D technologies made it possible to recreate models of these hollow, net-like structures, which were then cast in bronze using the ancient lost wax technique. The resulting sculptures bear the makings of their multi-layered process, and will be shown alongside his abstract graphite drawings.

**Reframing Nature features the work of Allan Wexler**, who considers the natural landscape's relationship to the roots of architecture. Wexler studied architecture at the Rhode Island School of Design from 1967 to 1972. Instead of designing physical buildings, he made work focusing on what was called anti-architecture or paper architecture. The pieces on view at Omi embrace the question of "what is architecture?" that is central to his practice. Wexler's works explore human activity and the built environment. Trees flourish with their own innate structural forms, but become lumber and source material for construction in man-made projects. He writes, "by dissolving the boundaries between the fine arts and the applied arts, between furniture design, architecture and theatrical performance, between sculpture and interactive exhibition design and between the practice and the research of architecture, that new ideas and innovation flourishes."

**Omi also reminds audiences that Pamela Fraser's ceramic tile installation originally created for the Omi 2015 Summer Show, *The Crayon Miscellany*, will be roaming for a third time this October.**

Fraser's artistic practice involves experimentation with concepts of color, shape and space, and she has lately taken her practice out into the landscape. Fraser's piece for Omi consists of over 200 vividly glazed ceramic sticks which "roam" the grounds of The Fields Sculpture Park guided by Fraser. The last two incarnations of this work: *Omi (Grid)*, and *Omi (Steps)* outlined a hedgerow, traced the line of Robert Grosvenor's *Untitled, 1984*, cut across a hillside, and hugged the shadow of Alison Saar's *Summer, 2011*. In early October, Fraser's work will move indoors to the glass walls of Omi's Visitors Center. This new iteration will be simultaneously part of the architecture and the landscape beyond.

#### **About the Artists:**

James Siena is a New York based artist whose complex, rule-based linear abstractions have situated him firmly within the trajectory of modern American art. His artwork is driven by self-imposed predetermined sets of rules, or "visual algorithms," which find their end-result in intensely concentrated, vibrantly-colored, freehand geometric patterns. Mr. Siena works across a diverse range of media, including lithography, etching, woodcut, engraving, drawing, painting, and most recently sculpture. His work is held in numerous prestigious public and private collections across the U.S., including at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Museum of Modern Art, and Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. James Siena will be exhibiting at Omi for the first time. This will be Siena's second exhibition to focus on his sculptural works following his exhibition at Pace Gallery, New York last April.

Alain Kirili was born in Paris, France in 1946 and has resided and worked primarily in New York City since 1979 – the same year the MOMA acquired his work *Indian Curve, 1976*. Kirili's work emphasizes an "aesthetics of spontaneity" and seeks its formal unity through the variety of materials he employs in a quest for "organic simplicity." His materials range from large blocks of limestone, ceramic, hand forged iron, and steel, always maintaining a sense of immediacy with his material. He has a strong interest in the relationship of monumental sculpture and public spaces. Kirili has completed several large commissions in this vein at the Tuileries Garden in Paris, University of Bourgogne in Dijon, Avenue de France in Paris, and most recently in the city of Grenoble. Alain Kirili's works *Solos* and *Alliance* have been on view in The Fields Sculpture Park since 1998.

Allan Wexler has worked in the fields of architecture, design and fine art for 45 years. He is represented by the Ronald Feldman Gallery in New York City and teaches in the School of Constructed Environments at Parsons the New School for Design in New York City. Wexler is a fellow of the American Academy in Rome and has won a Chrysler Award for Design innovation, The George Nelson Design Award from Interiors Magazine and the Henry J Leir Prize from the Jewish Museum in New York. He has had numerous national and international solo exhibitions and has lectured on his work internationally and has been reviewed by major art and design publications.

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### **Our Mission**

Omi International Arts Center seeks to foster an environment of creative exploration and exchange, professional opportunity and exposure, and a stylistically and culturally diverse community for creative artists from around the world. Through our programs and resulting public events - including our Residency Programs, The Fields Sculpture Park, Architecture Omi, and Education Omi - Omi contributes to a vibrant arts culture locally, regionally, and internationally. For more information visit [www.omiartscenter.org](http://www.omiartscenter.org)

Image credit: (left to right). James Siena, *Contents May Differ*, 2014, bronze, 29 ½ x 29 ½ x 25 ¼". Alain Kirili, *Wall Drawing for Arthelix*, 2014. Allan Wexler, *Reframing Nature*, 2015, archival digital prints, tree branch, and wood frames, dimensions variable.