

NANCY AZARA + DARLA BJORK | *A Shared Legacy*

The Richards Gallery at Opus 40



image courtesy VanDeb Prints

May 15 - June 21, 2026

The Richards Gallery at Opus 40

356 George Sickle Road

Saugerties, NY 12477

845-246-3400

Artists Reception: Sunday May 24, 2026 | 3:00 - 5:00 PM

Gallery Hours:

May | Friday - Monday: 10:00 - 5:00 PM

[TICKETS](#) | [EXHIBITION WEBPAGE](#)

(Saugerties, NY) - [Nancy Azara + Darla Bjork/A Shared Legacy](#) is an exhibition featuring the sculptures, paintings, and prints of the late feminist artist Nancy Azara (1930-2024), and encaustic paintings by her widow, Darla Bjork. Although their artworks were inspired by different sources (Azara explored matriarchal archetypes while Bjork mines the psyche), both artists are neo-expressionists and emphasize the power of the gesture in their mark-making. Together for over 40 years, Nancy Azara and Darla Bjork were a couple during a transitional time in American history, from a barely tolerated union in the 80s through an official recognition of their relationship in 2011, when gay marriage finally became legal in New York State. The artists were both part of the New York Feminist Art Institute, an organization that grew out of the 1970s feminist movement and offered art and writing classes taught by women for women.

[Nancy Azara + Darla Bjork](#) features a reception for the artist on **Sunday, May 24, from 3:00 - 5:00 PM** at The Richards Gallery | Opus 40, 356 George Sickle Road, Saugerties, NY 12477, and runs through Sunday 21 June, 2026.

About Nancy Azara: Nancy Azara was an artist and feminist educator best known for her large-scale wood sculptures and mixed media collages. Nancy developed a distinct style of sculpture - found wood, carved, ornamented, and mounted. Instinctive chip carving peels off an outer layer of wood, reaching for an essentialized raw experience of the body, of the limbs, exposing flesh and blood. This work explored life cycles, utilizing the metaphor of a tree for personhood. Egg tempera, often in reds and pinks, and aluminum, palladium, and metal leaf gilding recover these exposed layers, exploring folkloric stories of women's roles, goddess imagery, ancient symbols, mystic spiritual traditions, and affirmation of female self.

About Darla Bjork: Darla Bjork is an artist who, early on, channeled her creative energy into her career as a psychiatrist in NYC. While her lines and forms often appear simple, there are always formative structures and elements beneath. The layering and depth seem to reflect insights drawn from Darla's years working in psychiatry. She is an artist whose paintings often exemplify the hidden layers of living a human life. Darla has had solo exhibits in the United States and Europe. Originally a founding member of Ceres Gallery, a women-run, non-profit collective gallery in downtown Manhattan, she joined SOHO20 Gallery, a women's collective gallery founded in 1973, where she continues to be a member. Bjork co-authored an essay with Nancy Azara, published in *Entering the Picture: Judy Chicago*, The Fresno Feminist Art Program, and the *Collective Visions of Women Artists*, edited by Jill Fields, Routledge, 09/14/2011.

This exhibition at The Richards Gallery at Opus 40 will travel to Venice, Italy, for an affiliated show at [Castello 925](#) during the 61st Venice Biennale.



NANCY AZARA

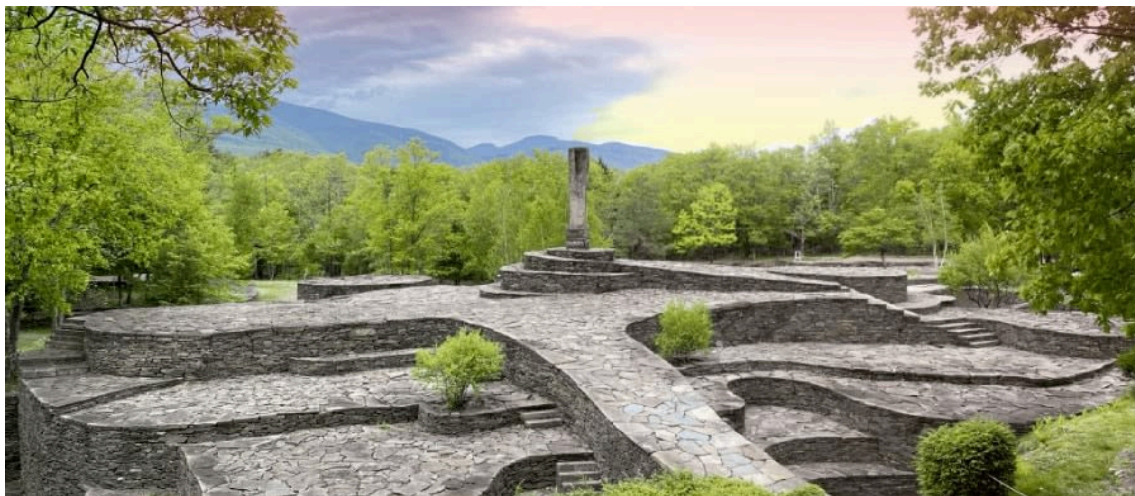
Leaves in Shadow, 2016
aquatint on vellum 17 x 14 in
courtesy [VanDeb Prints](#)



DARLA BJORK

Covid Windows 7-31-20
oil stick on wood 24 x 24 in

TICKETS



About OPUS 40:

Created over four decades by visionary artist and Bard professor Harvey Fite, Opus 40 is a 6.5-acre earthwork made of finely fitted bluestone, rising out of an abandoned quarry at the foot of Overlook Mountain in Saugerties, NY. In 1978, Fite's widow, Barbara, established the nonprofit Opus 40 Inc, opening the sculpture, along with 63 acres of meadows, walking trails, bluestone quarries, as well as the Quarryman's Museum to visitors from all over the world. Today, Opus 40 offers a diverse selection of events in a wholly unique setting that *Architectural Digest* has called "one of the most beguiling works of art on the entire continent."



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