

Slither

Reed; weaving process based on traditional Appalachian ribbed egg basket techniques

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BRIAN LONSWAY MEMORIAL AWARD FOR HUMOR IN CRAFT

The artist's words:

My works are made with reed, a natural fiber, and have many inspirations. "Slither" is inspired by alligators and other crawling reptiles. I like to think he is a humorous comment on these creatures and exists in a space between the real and the imagined.

A pale tan alligator-like reptile woven from reed stands squarely on all four feet. It measures 10" from his feet to the top of his back and 61" – just over 5 feet – from the tip of his nose to his tail, which separates into three strands and rests in coils behind the reptile's rear legs.

The creature's long snout narrows toward its blunt tip where two small nostrils of flat reed stick up at the tip. The reed has been pulled up and forms a small loop on either side of the centerline of the head. Six long scraggily teeth of thin round reed protrude downwards from either side of its mouth. Almond shaped eyes look out from the sides of the reptile's head, near the top of its flattened skull and above the widening of the skull by the back of the jaw. A large amber colored bead rests in each socket framed by upper and lower eyelids of paler broad ribbons of reed.

A band of three rows of the same lighter colored flat reed as used in the eyelids is flanked by several rows of tightly woven round reed that defines the creature's neck area. Five rows of bumps run the length of the center portion of the reptile's back. They are made of flat reed that has been pulled up as it was woven, forming loops. If these strands were separated from the sculpture, they would look like corkscrew curls or spiraling strands. The lines of bumps are not all the same length. The far left and right lines of bumps are shorter than the three rows in the center. The torso of the creature consists of a variety of reed sizes and shapes. Narrower flat reeds are woven in bands at the neck and below the hind legs where the rounded barrel shaped body tapers to a cone-like shape before splitting into the three strands of tail. The slightly pot-bellied figure rests on four legs made of narrow flat reed woven around a frame of thin round reeds that run the vertical length of the legs and fan out into three toes on each of the creature's legs. Claws at the tip of each toe are the ends of the round reeds that extend beyond the flat weaving.