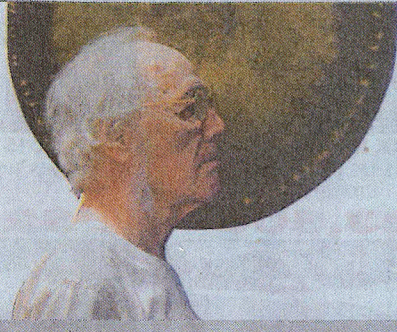


CAPE CORAL / FORT MYERS FRIDAY, JULY 29, 2016



THE NEWS-PRESS

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**Hit the art scene
at Rauschenberg
Gallery exhibit.
Gulf Coasting**


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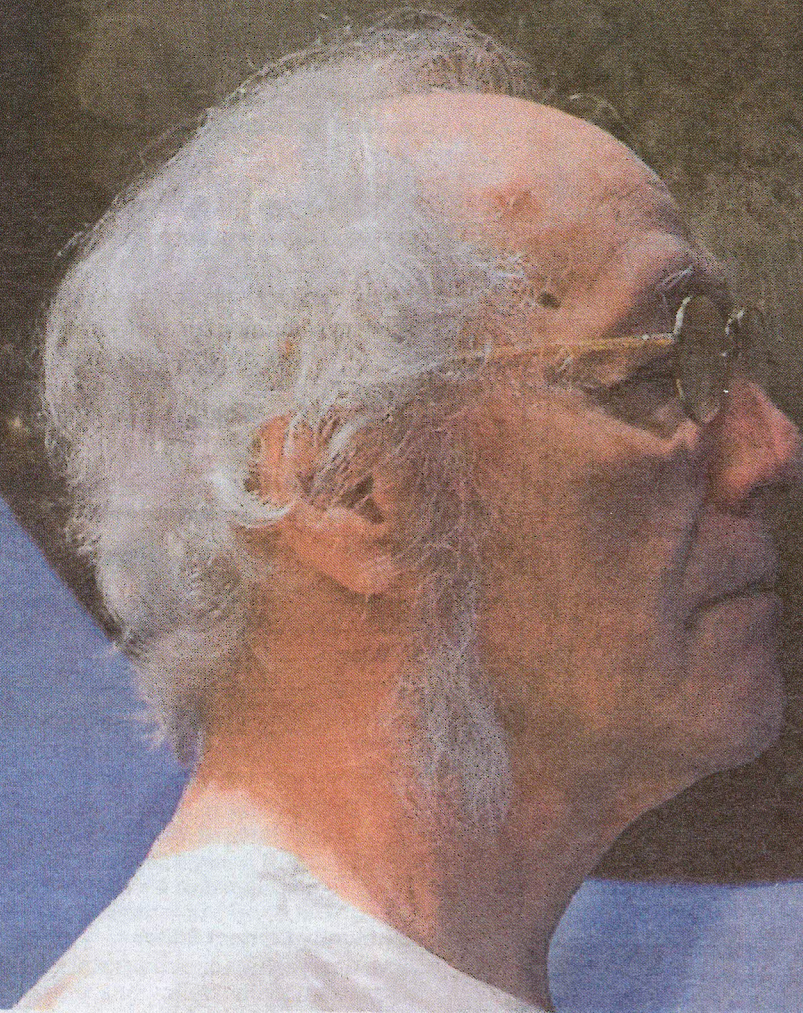
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gulf coasting

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**A
SMASH
HIT**

Take a whack
at Rauschenberg
Gallery's
new exhibit **Page 3**



Cover story



Gulf Coasting's guide to this weekend, the next 10 days and a month ahead. Go to gulfcoastinglive.com to see full, searchable calendar of events for this week and beyond.

Hit the art

It's OK to whack the new exhibit at Rauschenberg Gallery

CHARLES RUNNELLS
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Don't be afraid: You can touch the art at Rauschenberg Gallery's new exhibit.

Heck, you can do more than just touch it. Why don't you grab a mallet and give it a nice, strong whack?

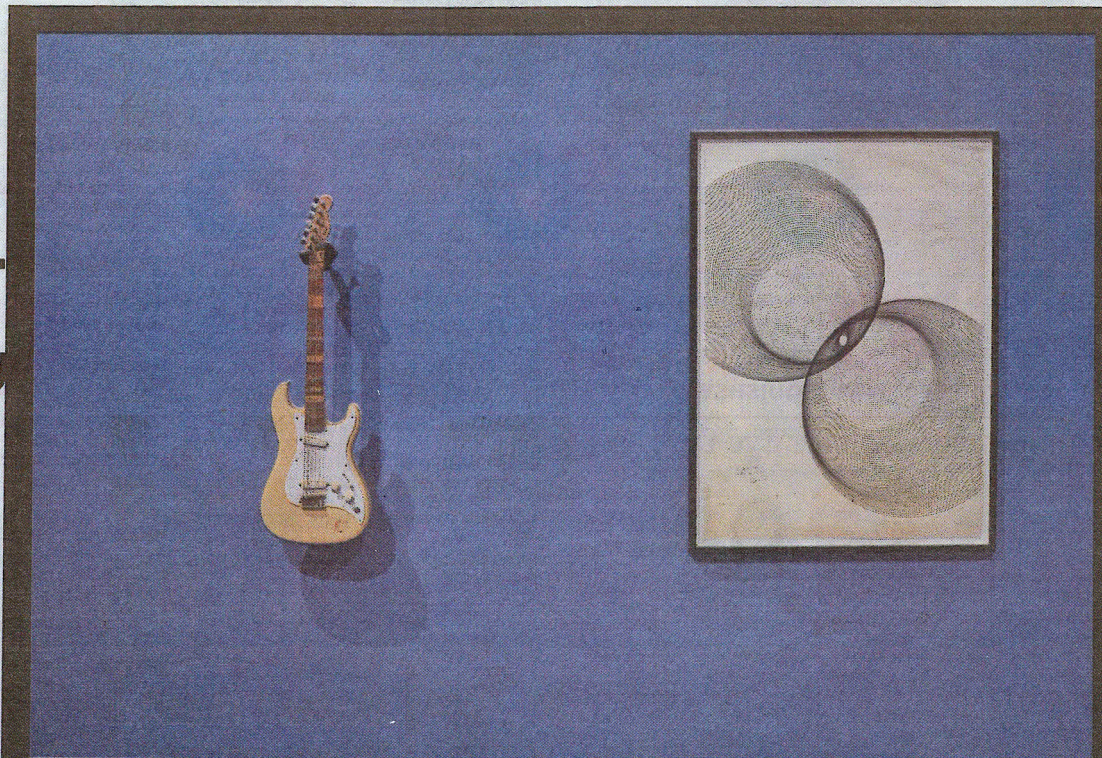
The harder you hit it, the better.

That's the idea behind a new exhibit at the Florida SouthWestern State College gallery in south Fort Myers. It's not just a place filled with artwork. It's a musical instrument — and visitors are invited to play along.

"It's an interactive installation," says curator and gallery director Jade Dellinger. "Anybody who comes here can play it. We get a room full of kids here, and they just got nuts!"

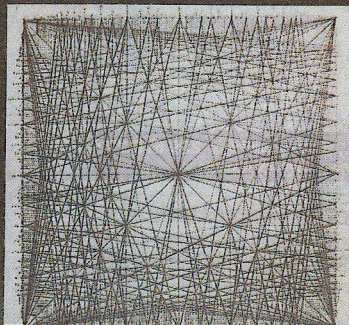
"Glenn Branca & Philip Corner re:SOUND" opened June 3, but Dellinger says it's such an important exhibit that he's extended it through Oct. 22.

The unique show pairs two famous musical pioneers under one roof for the first time: Philip Corner



One of Glenn Branca's handmade guitars sits alongside a graphic representation of music.

KIRSTEN PETTIFOR



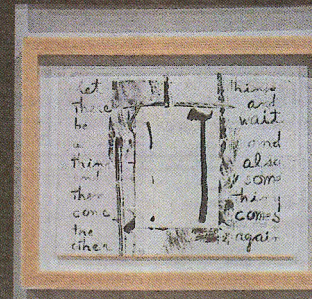
CHARLES RUNNELLS / NEWS-PRESS.COM

Glenn Branca's graphic scores reduce music to pure mathematics and transform it into charts, graphs or other forms.



CHARLES RUNNELLS / NEWS-PRESS.COM

The guitar Glenn Branca played on his influential album "The Ascension" is on display.



CHARLES RUNNELLS / NEWS-PRESS.COM

This is one of many pieces in Philip Corner's graphic score for "Metal Meditations." Musicians follow the open-ended instructions to play it.

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Art

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of the Fluxus art movement, best known for his legendary work "Piano Activities," where a piano is dismantled and destroyed in the process of making the music; and Glenn Branca, the New York composer and guitarist known for his huge electric-guitar orchestras and his experimentation with droning sounds, repetition, harmonics and alternative tunings.

Both artists have very different ways of approaching music, but they go far beyond traditional sheet music with its bars, clefs and notes.

Branca takes a more cerebral, scientific approach. His artwork hanging on the Rauschenberg Gallery walls reduces music to its bare bones: Charts and graphs transforming those sounds to pure math or sound waves.

Meanwhile, Corner's famous "Metal Meditations" dives into the more free-form, spiritual side of things. For that percussion piece, musicians grab mallets and hit various resonant metal objects by following a series of open-ended instructions/artwork. The Korean-calligraphy inspired art features subjective instructions such as "Rub the rim" and "Let there be a thing, and then come the other things."

The result: The music never sounds the same way twice.

"What you're seeing is actually a musical score," Dellinger says as he shows off three gallery walls filled with Corner's famous "graphic score." "But it's not using standard notations."

The exhibit goes hand-in-hand with another, higher-profile show that Dellinger curated at New York's How! Happening art gallery. That ongoing show focuses on Fluxus — an art movement participated in by former Rauschenberg Gallery subjects such as Yoko Ono and John Cage — and it's been getting national attention and encouraging people to visit the Fort Myers show, too.

"What's happening there," Dellinger says, "has been getting people excited about what's happening here."

Corner helped perform "Metal Meditations" at the Rauschenberg Gallery on July 9, and Dellinger says he's hoping to entice Branca to Fort Myers at some point, too.

In the meantime, Glenn Branca Ensemble member Luke Schwartz will perform experimental guitar music at the gallery on Aug. 13. Schwartz's trio will feature him on electric guitar and playing a selection of new and old songs.

Schwartz says Branca was an influ-



If you go

What: "Glenn Branca & Philip Corner re:SOUND"

When: Now through Oct. 22.

Where: Bob Rauschenberg Gallery at Florida Southwestern State College, 8099 College Parkway, south Fort Myers

Admission: Free

Gallery hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday

Upcoming event: Luke Schwartz of the Glenn Branca Ensemble performs experimental guitar music at 1 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 13.

Info: 489-9313 or RauschenbergGallery.com

Visitors to Rauschenberg Gallery are encouraged to grab a mallet and hit the various metal objects hanging from two frameworks. The idea is to perform Philip Corner's "Metal Meditations" by following the "graphic score" on the gallery walls. You can also make music by crumpling paper.

CHARLES RUNNELLS / NEWS-PRESS.COM

ence on him long before he joined the ensemble. "He has an intuitive musicality, but he's also adventurous. That was a very, very cool thing for me, and it's always been very inspiring."

The Fort Myers exhibit marks the first time the original version of Corner's "Metal Meditations" score has ever been shown in the United States or anywhere else, Dellinger says. Galleries and museums have displayed Corner's official screen-printed reproductions, but not the original.

"They've never been shown anywhere in the world," Dellinger says. "This is the world premiere of the drawings."

Visitors to the gallery can grab wooden mallets and use them to follow Corner's graphic instructions — displayed in a series of framed art pieces on the walls — and whack various resonant metal objects suspended from two frameworks: A brake drum, for example, or a discarded satellite TV dish, or a water pitcher, or a metal letter "G" that actually plays a G note when you hit it.

There's even a musical instrument created by the late art legend Robert Rauschenberg, the gallery's namesake. It's a simple brass sheet suspended in an aluminum frame. And, yes, you can hit that, too.

Art lovers are used to the "Look, but don't touch" rule at museums and galleries. But that rule doesn't apply at Rauschenberg Gallery (at least for the suspended metal objects, but please don't whack the pieces in frames on the wall or in the exhibit cases).

Gallery visitors seem to love that idea.

"This is cool!" said Nayda Carmona last week as she walked around the gallery and experimented by hitting various objects with her mallet.

"This is so beautiful," she said afterward. "It brought out the child in me. I really connected with the childlike passion for art that we all share."

The Branca side of the exhibition is equally important, Dellinger says. The gallery is displaying Branca's chart-like scores and art pieces that replicate the distinctive waves and ripples of musical sound. Plus there are artifacts from his most famous works, including hand-made guitars such as the one he played on his 1981 album "The Ascension."

Branca is most famous for his experimental compositions featuring as many as 100 electric guitars at once, and for "The Ascension" — named by the late David Bowie as one of his all-time favorite albums. The Glenn Branca Ensemble has featured famous

alumni such as Thurston Moore and Lee Ranaldo of Sonic Youth.

Dellinger likes the idea of pairing Corner's almost spiritual approach to music with Branca's more scientific method.

"There's a very interesting kind of dialogue between these two things," he says. "This is a pairing of two very different people... But at their core, they're both musicians."

FSW music professor Tom Smith says he's been a fan of both musicians for decades. He even got to perform "Metal Meditations" with Corner when he appeared at the gallery.

Few people were making music like those two men did in the 60s, 70s and 80s. And Smith was there, loving every minute of it.

"There was all this new music," he says, "this new experimental music coming out. It was so fun and so interesting."

Smith loves what Dellinger has done by combining the two artists under one roof for the first time.

"They're reflective of each other," he says. "I think they are two sides of the same coin, almost."

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