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Hill exhibit presents ideas of the '60s

"Part to Part," an intriguing and thoughtful contemporary exhibition at the Hill Gallery in Birmingham, brings into the present ideas established by 1960s minimal and some post-minimalist sculpture.

Serialism — the idea that one part leads to the next or that a series of similar things come one after another in spatial or temporal succession — is the basic concept of the work in the show. It is a contemporary, conceptual method of organizing and constructing sculptural elements. Some elements are repeated in regular succession or intervals, others in irregular ones. What distinguishes this art from the styles of earlier artists — except perhaps that of Eva Hesse — is its connection to nature, to images, symbol and the metaphysical as opposed to the purely theoretical and geometric.

"SIGNAL," Heide Fasnacht's wooden sphere, is constructed of irregular circular parts made of black and white striped barricade board. Though the sphere is a simple geometric form, Fasnacht makes it into a frantic, almost brutal-looking object with crudely cut edges and her dramatic, forceful re-use of materials. The board still signals a connection to barricades, but now it seems the chewed-up core of some space-age satellite. Messages, symbols and emotion, rather than purity of form, are the work's subject.

For Sandra Osip, serialism manifests itself in natural progression, in the spiraling growth patterns she uses to shape her sheet metal creatures. From this relationship she creates hybrids — babies of decaying industry — oversized, unidentifiable as a species, and fascinating.

Of the new artists to the gallery,

both Carol Hepper, with her stretched fish-skin pods, and Robin Hill with her wax-covered "Lean-To" that looks like nature's architecture, are worth following. Their art is oddly captivating.

The exhibition continues to Aug. 8 at 163 Townsend, Birmingham; 11-5:30 Tues.-Sat.

— Marsha Miro