

# THE TRIBECA TRIB

Rebecca Manson: "A Powerful Unity of Little Things in Tribeca Park's New Sculpture"

By Carl Glassman

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Rebecca Manson's sculpture, *Come Close and the View Gets Wider*, was installed Monday, July 9, in Tribeca Park. Photo: Carl Glassman/Tribeca Trib

"It was love at first sight with this park," said artist Rebecca Manson, standing next to her eight-foot-tall spherical sculpture, the new temporary centerpiece for Tribeca Park at West Broadway and Beach Street in Tribeca.

The work had just been installed Monday morning and Manson was watching the first curious viewers as they passed through the park, or got up from a bench for a better look.

"When I came to the park and envisioned the piece here," she said, "I loved the geometry of the space and the idea of this quiet oasis in the middle of this busy Downtown area."

The work, titled *Come Close and the View Gets Wider*, is composed of thousands of ceramic bone-like pieces. ("I want to know how many so bad!" the artist said.) The sculpture invites viewers, once seeing it from a distance as a big textured globe, to look closer at the many tiny parts that make up the whole.

JESSICA  
SILVERMAN

621 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94108  
jessicasilvermangallery.com +1 415 255 9508



Only by examining the sculpture up close (left) can the viewer get a good sense of the intricate weaving of many thousands of ceramic pieces that make up the surface of the piece. Photos: Carl Glassman/Tribeca Trib

"Mostly, I just want people to take in the idea of all these little things that are insignificant on their own coming together to make something really powerful and strong," the Brooklyn-based artist, 29, said of her first public work. But it is also, she said, a metaphor for community, "and it being a globe is about caring for the planet and everyone uniting."

The piece, conceived four years ago, took a year to come together and for six weeks alone, Manson said, she was tearing off bits of clay and would "roll, smush, smush" them into the bone-like parts, to be fired and glazed and stored in piles, then organized by shape and color.

Manson started with a four-foot-diameter model of the work, then figured out how to structurally scale it up so that it could be strong enough to be supported. She composed the pieces on a fiberglass dome that served as a mold. Removed from the mold, the two sculptural hemispheres were joined together on a specially fabricated aluminum structure.

Manson, a trained ceramicist, said she wants to change the public perception of ceramics as a small, fragile art form. "I want to push the expectations of what ceramics can be," she said, "and show how tough it is."

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Rebecca Manson with her newly installed sculpture, "Come Close and the View Gets Wider." Photo: Carl Glassman/Tribeca Trib

*Come Close and the View Gets Wider*, part of the Parks Department's Art in the Parks program, will be on view in Tribeca Park for one year.

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