

A Few Words From Down Under

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then compared the artist's efforts in clay to another more celebrated local practitioner, who works in bronze! It was blatantly obvious that all he saw were odd figures, not the universal truths they presented.

Most art 'critics' view an exhibition through eyes clouded by what they know. They see all that's gone before - in art history, in the artist's career, in the local scene but not what's in front of their eyes. They feel it is their responsibility to place the artwork within a socio-political environment believing their academic credence allows them to fix the boundaries of the art scene. On the other hand, art 'reviewers' leave the backpack full of local prejudices or academic references at home. Instead of analyzing the work with reference to politics, history, culture, personalities or whatever, they look at the work to see what it is saying and relate to it in a personal manner. Yes, our response to fine art is enhanced by knowledge, however it should not be swayed by concepts that lay beyond the artwork, or the self.

As an art reviewer I try to see what the artist is saying, in relation to life and/or art. When attending an exhibition my overall response to the whole is noted prior to recording my interpretation of particular works. Sometimes I'll chat with, or listen to the comments by other visitors in the gallery to glean their reactions to the exhibition as visual art communicates on different levels to different viewers.

I recall one show by a respected artist in this town and how, after going through the exhibition jotting down my responses, I tuned into the comments of a brace of ladies perusing the paintings. I heard oos and ahhs as they approached each exhibit, and how they were students of the artist some years back. As they viewed the work they chatted about the artist's good looks, his teaching methods and how much they enjoyed art school. They never once discussed the object in front of them in the present instead they reminisced about the past and considered where to have lunch in the immediate future.

There was another woman in the gallery, sitting on a settee quietly absorbed in one of the larger works. Her attention caused me to focus anew on the particu-

lar painting. The artist produces abstract works often inspired by the colours of the 'outback' landscape as seen from an aerial view. When I looked the second time I discovered a painted line I had not noticed previously. It was a continuous, single brush mark that seemed to meander through the whole composition, sometimes boldly sometimes barely there, like a train of thought. When the woman rose from her reverie, we discussed this one brush stroke and each of us discovered a whole new meaning in the work. And yes, we both knew the artist but wasted no time chatting about him rather we talked about the work around us.

The first two ladies are like many art critics. They were not engaging with the art, they were discussing history and their personal encounters with the artist. They had formed their opinion of the exhibition prior to entering the gallery. On the other hand, the lone woman who immersed herself in the art, to concentrate on its concepts, composition, colour and tactile surface, to discover a personal response to the work, was actually 'reviewing' it.

We can't all be art critics but we should all learn to be honest art reviewers. Artists are interested in, and often want to know, if they are reaching their audience. They accept 'corrective' criticism that comes from their peers and/or feedback from the informed viewer, as there are times they cannot see their own shortcomings.

Let's all become art reviewers. We won't make much money but we'll find riches beyond compare.

Judith McGrath lives in Kalamunda, Western Australia, 25 minutes east of Perth. She received a BA in Fine Art and History from the University of Western Australia. McGrath lectured in Art History and Visual Literacy at various colleges around the Perth area, and was an art reviewer for *The Sunday Times* and *The Western Review* both published in the Perth area. McGrath was also a freelance writer and reviewer for various art magazines in Australia. She also co-ordinated the web site *Art Seen in Western Australia* found at (<http://pandora.nla.gov.au/tep/25381>). McGrath is currently enjoying retirement.

Cabarrus Arts Council in Concord, NC, Offers Exhibit of Works That Tell a Story

The Cabarrus Arts Council in Concord, NC, is presenting *Unresolved*, an exhibition exploring contemporary notions of storytelling, on view at The Galleries, through July 29, 2016.

Unresolved includes paintings, photographs, ceramics and mixed media artworks by 10 artists: Tami Bone, Pattie Chalmers, Robert Crum, Denise Duong, Andy Farkas, Harriet Marshall Goode, Erik Haagensen, Kat Moser, Beth Tarkington, and Yuko Nogami Taylor.

Tami Bone of Austin, TX, grew up in deep South Texas where she spent a childhood oftentimes free and driven by her imagination. Her photographic work today pulls from impressions made during these early beginnings that make their way into her narrative images.

Pattie Chalmers of Carbondale, IL, is a ceramic sculptor who creates narrative tableaux using images culled from childhood tales, four-for-a-dollar comic books, movies-of-the-week, and personal experience. She is on the art faculty at Southern Illinois University.

Robert Crum of Salisbury, NC, is a classically trained artist who works out of a studio at ClearWater Artist Studios in Concord. He is known for working in a variety of media, including oil paintings, sculptures, mosaics, murals and watercolors. He often paints using the same materials and methods used by the Old Masters.

Denise Duong of Oklahoma City, OK, is a Vietnamese-American mixed media artist working with paper, acrylic, and different printing techniques. Many things



Work by Harriet Marshall Goode

inspire her, including traveling, discovery, and adventure. The spontaneity of life drives her imagination.

Andy Farkas of Asheville, NC, is a print and book artist who works with wood engraving, drypoint and etching techniques to create detailed, evocative images. He considers the true nature of his work storytelling.

Harriet Marshall Goode of Rock Hill, SC, can't imagine her life without painting. She is a figure painter because she is intrigued by the shape and form of human creatures. Although they often appear amorphous, the figures are always women who represent people she knows or people

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12TH ANNUAL MINT MUSEUM POTTERS MARKET INVITATIONAL

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www.mintmuseum.org/happenings

FOLLOW POTTERS MARKET INVITATIONAL



Susan Filley (American, 1957-). Vase, 2014. Porcelain. Gift of Daisy Wade Bridges. 2015.10.3. Collection of The Mint Museum, Charlotte, North Carolina. Image © Mint Museum of Art, Inc.

Presented by the Delhom Service League, the Ceramics Affiliate of The Mint Museum

Proceeds from admissions and sponsorships support ceramics collections, exhibitions, library, and educational programs of the museum.

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she makes up because she would like to know them.

Erik Haagensen of Greenville, TN, creates sturdy functional pottery that combines traditional firing methods and materials with odd little illustrations inspired by science fiction and fantasy. His stoneware pottery provides a delightful canvas for fine line drawings of happy, confused, drunken and lovesick monsters and aliens.

Kat Moser of Snowmass, CO, is a photographer who explores the potency of the female form and the otherworldly aspects of earth and water through her elegant, ethereal and often enigmatic photographs. Using a converted infrared camera, she often depicts women as wholly integrated elements of the natural environment.

Beth Tarkington of Marietta, GA, makes handmade ceramic pieces of earthenware clay using slab, coil and mold techniques. They are one-of-a-kind narrative works, incorporating painterly images and occasionally words. Each piece tells a story, relates an experience or relives a memory and encourages a connection between the viewer and the work.

Yuko Nogami Taylor of Raleigh, NC, is a Tokyo native whose artistic inspiration comes from modern western art and historical Japanese art. She skillfully merges



Work by Andy Frakas

the heritage of Southern African American culture and Japanese culture into oil paintings, creating harmony between nature and people.

Guests will get the opportunity to take A Closer Look at the exhibition on Thursday, July 28, beginning at 5:30pm. The free event will include a behind-the-scenes tour of the exhibition and the opportunity to meet other art lovers.

The Galleries are located in the Historic Cabarrus County Courthouse on Union Street S. in Concord. Tours and hands-on, exhibition-related activities for children are available. Admission and activities are free.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Council at 704/920-2787 or visit (www.CabarrusArtsCouncil.org).

Jerald Melberg Gallery in Charlotte, NC, Features Works by Nicholas Napoletano and Matthew Steele

Jerald Melberg Gallery in Charlotte, NC, will present *Two to Watch*, featuring works by sculptor Matthew Steele and painter Nicholas Napoletano, both of Charlotte, on view from July 16 through Sept. 10, 2016. A reception will be held on July 15, from 6-8pm.

Two to Watch aims to celebrate these two young Charlotte artists and introduce them to our collectors. Melberg decided to showcase the work of Steele and Napoletano after making numerous studio visits

and considering the work of over fifty artists. He found that the superior craftsmanship, as well as the intriguing visual components found in both artists' work, is certainly worthy of recognition.

Napoletano has earned a strong reputation for hyperrealist paintings replete with allegory and symbolism. Rich color and idealized figures populate his compositions which are stylistically in line with Mannerism and the High Renaissance.

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