

Style visual arts

BY SU BYRON

Design for delight

Brian Miller's mixed-media wall panels delight the mind. His techniques deceive the eye, and often defy classification. Some pieces resemble stained-glass windows, but they're actually made of wood, acrylic and epoxy resin with gold-leaf accents. Miller fabricates all the elements in his studio, bending wood into shape using boat builders' techniques, and even pulping his own paper. "I could never work in just one medium," he says. "It would bore me completely." His art is anything but boring, and ranges from small-scale creations for private homes to public art on a grand scale, such as "Fireworks," his two-story installation in the lobby of Sarasota's luxury waterfront condominium, Beau Ciel. "What fascinates me is creating something no one has seen before," says Miller. "Ringing students often try to guess my techniques, but I'm pretty tight-lipped about it." His works may be seen through July at Hodgel Gallery, 46 S. Palm Ave., Sarasota; 366-1246.



"Intrigue" by Brian Miller.

"Uplifting Revelations" is this month's show at the Art Center Manatee, and it's bound to be revealing because the theme is, well, underwear. "It's playful, creative and accessible; something almost all people can relate to and enjoy," says curator Laura Avery of Ringling College's Selby Gallery. "It also gives artists a chance to creatively play with a theme they might not normally participate in." The exhibition includes works by Avery, Leslie Fry, Nathan Skiles, Dee Hood, Dolores Cox, Polly Johnson, Sheryl Haler, Patrick Lindhardt, Alison Watkins, Alexandra Evans, Kevin Dean, Patricia Tobin, Wendy Dickinson and Pam Sumner, and is dedicated to Roxie Thomas, a Ringling College instructor who passed away this year. "This is a great way to expose people to conceptual art," says Avery. No pun intended. July 6 through Aug. 10, with an opening reception on July 13, from 5 to 7 p.m., at Art Center Manatee, 209 Ninth St. W., Bradenton; 746-2862.



"Waved Muzzlet, Ringed Deeplet" by Leslie Fry.

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It's in the cards

In 2004, artist Pamela Jablonski began work on her "Alphabet Tarot," a series of intuitive paintings based on the letters of the alphabet. After deep meditation, Jablonski attached meanings to the images. What happened next was a natural. She reproduced the paintings on a deck of 5-inch-by-7-inch cards. "I developed a Tarot-like card game as a tool for spiritual introspection," says Jablonski. "Each card represents a different aspect of the personality, which we explore in a reading. I hope it will give people a new perspective on what art can do." For now, the artist's readings are strictly one-on-one, although she plans to mass produce the cards. Jablonski's "Alphabet Tarot" reflects the shamanistic edge of her recent art, which grew out of her intense study of mystic traditions. Curious? The artist can be reached at 955-4278.



Barbara Schicitano

Barbara Schicitano is an artist, art teacher and former gallery owner. She is currently the president of Women Contemporary Artists (WCA), a regional, professional women's artists group. Schicitano will be exhibiting her art at the Dancing Crane Gallery in Bradenton through July.

Tell us a little about Women Contemporary Artists.

Our goal is to inspire and encourage women artists, and make their work visible. To help make that happen, we sponsor juried exhibitions and host social gatherings and various programs throughout the year. We also present scholarship awards to outstanding women college students.

Who can join WCA?

It's open to any woman artist who wants to actively participate. Right now, we have a membership of 125, and we don't accept more than 200. Interested artists can apply at our Web site: www.WomenContemporaryArtists.com.

Why is it important to have an artists' group that is exclusive to women?

It's a nice opportunity for women to support women and bond as a sisterhood of artists. I've made some terrific friends by being part of WCA.

How does WCA help younger artists?

We present two substantial cash awards to female fine art majors. The objective is to inspire and support female art students who want to keep fine art as their focus. We also encourage collaborative interaction between our regional academic organizations and the local arts community. We work with Manatee Community College, New College and Ringling College of Art and Design to select a student completing her sophomore year, who not only presents extraordinary talent but also the commitment and dedication to continue her academic studies in fine arts.

What are some of your organization's long-range goals?

Improve our exhibition venues and expand our scholarship program.

Your thoughts about Sarasota's visual arts community?

We have many galleries that support local artists, but we need a large facility that offers classrooms and exhibition space.

Wishes for Sarasota's arts community?

I'd love to see our community become more interested in its wealth of visual artists. There is so much amazing talent in our local area; we need to share more of a light on it.