

Art explores boundaries between imagination, reality

RACINE — “Blurry Boundaries: Contemporary Artists, Imagination, and the Spaces Between” will be on exhibit March 9–Aug. 27 at the Racine Art Museum, 441 Main St. This contemporary art exhibit will feature works made from a variety of materials that address the ambiguous connection between reality and imagination.

On a certain level, being imaginative means producing things in the mind that exist independent of reality, including scenarios that are invented or fantastic. While there may still be connections to day-to-day reality, the scenes, sensations, or ideas within the imagination are fictional. However, philosophically, it could be argued that what happens in the mind is just a different kind of reality. This vagueness about defining what truly is — or is not — real leaves potential for artists to investigate, create and actualize their own narratives.

The exhibit addresses these ambiguities, or spaces between, by sharing a wide range of works including sculpture, painting, prints and art jewelry. There are invented characters, versions of legendary tales, musings about death, and scenes that simultaneously seem real and unreal. With narratives operating in a space between fiction, fantasy and reality, the contemporary artists whose works are included represent a variety of backgrounds and perspectives.

To narrow the scope of an exhibition that addresses ambiguity and the imagination, the works featured in “Blurry Boundaries” mostly — although not exclusively — reflect visualized narratives. Each artist, depending on their individual style



SUBMITTED PHOTO

“Memento Mori Sewol” by Yeonhee Cheong is made of fiber-reactive dye on cotton fabric.

and materials used, offers elements of a story — some depicting characters or scenes while others might rely on associations or metaphor. These elements are filtered through the artist, and therefore, allow for various interpretations or shifting meaning.

While primarily drawn from RAM’s collection, the exhibition also spotlights loaned work from Wisconsin-based Yeonhee Cheong and Illinois-based Paul Andrew Wandless. Cheong’s textiles address the almost incomprehensibility of tragedy while Wandless’ ceramic vessels and prints are filled with invented characters and scenarios.

Additionally, the loan of “Lost at Sea” by Edouard Duval-Carrié represents a newly formed partnership between RAM and Art Bridges, a foundation dedicated to expanding access to American art across the nation. Duval-Carrié’s large-scale two-dimensional work addresses the propaganda of paradise, responding to the way historical imagery sometimes diminished cultural identity.

RAM is open from noon to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday. Admission is \$7, or \$5 for senior citizens 62 and older and students.

Pollard Gallery hosting new shows in March

KENOSHA — In March, the Pollard Gallery, 518 56th St., hosts a show featuring works by photographer Nancy Strauss and artist Tim Rozwadowski.

The opening reception is 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, March 5.

During the reception — free and open to the public — local guitarist Tim Venturellar will be performing.

Strauss will be exhibiting her pieces and gift items for the entire month of March. Her work includes photography, jewelry, postcards and animated pictures. She’s been making jewelry for many years using semi-precious beads, fused glass and metal clay. Strauss learned to make her own metal clay creations and incorporate fused glass pieces into them.

Her photos on display include images of nature, animals and points of interest throughout the Kenosha area. Postcards of the Kenosha area and of the animals at the Milwaukee Zoo will be also be available. And, to honor the memory of her daughter, Melissa, her book, “Melissa’s Zoo Trip” will be available for purchase.

Rozwadowski is a self-taught local artist who uses water reducible oils. His work at the gallery will feature 6-by-6-inch framed art on panels he describes as “affordable art for everyone.” Rozwadowski started painting when he retired from Sherwin Williams in 2014, switching to water reducible oils after taking a workshop with artist Dennis Perrin. The paint is a modified oil paint that can be cleaned with water. He has a studio at Kemper Center, and his work can be seen at the Milwaukee Area Artist Resource Center, the Pollard Gallery, Lemon Street Gallery and the Anderson Arts Center.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A painting by Tim Rozwadowski.

New artists

Pollard Gallery has also added several new artists: Jennifer Dougherty, Kathleen Pulz, Jesse Haack and Jessica Bolton.

Haack describes himself as: “I’m old. I’m retired. I graduated from the U-of-I Urbana. I’m a veteran. I’m happily married. I love music.” He has been painting his whole adult life, off and on, and uses traditional oils and watercolors.

Bolton has had a lifelong love of art. She drew constantly as a child and took drawing classes in high school. In college, she took one drawing class and dabbled on her own with pen, ink, and colored pencils. Then, one day after she was working full-time as a teacher, she decided that she wanted to try acrylics and hasn’t put them down since. Bolton found that creating art with bright colors and bold strokes after work helped keep her centered and focused during the day.

Her abstract art is very emotive; she paints what she feels. Her paintings feature many layers, with the first being modeling paste “to give some nice

texture to the piece,” she said. She also incorporates various types of paper and tapes to her works for added texture.

Dougherty has taught art to students ages 4 to adults for the past 37 years. Most recently, before relocating to Kenosha from Chicago, she taught courses in fashion design, weaving and watercolor for the North Shore Art League in Winnetka, Ill. Dougherty currently works in acrylics with a focus on painted furniture. Her interests include floral photography, weaving, watercolor and other media.

“I made myself a promise to move to Kenosha many years ago, and my dream has come true,” she said. “Kenosha is a magical, musical, artistic town. I did not grow up here, but I will enjoy growing old here.”

Pulz started out as an art student but didn’t start painting seriously until years later. She paints mainly in oils, but supplements her expression in acrylics and watercolors. Pulz is most proud and honored to be commissioned by an assisted living

facility to paint six large-scale paintings of Milwaukee’s beloved parks. Her paintings “reflect the deep work of observation, spirit searching, illumination and offering to all those wanting or needing confirmation that there is beauty and salvation even in dark times.”

Gallery events

A new event at Pollard is “Sketch Night,” 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 8. Participants will sketch from a still life. Charcoal, pencil and paper will be available, or participants can bring their own supplies. Portrait artist Roger Marks will be the “coach” for the evening.

The gallery has also added “Creative Time” every other Wednesday. In March, Creative Time is March 9 and 20, from 10 a.m. to noon. Participants are asked to “bring what you’re working on and we can be creative together.”

The gallery is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and noon to 4 p.m. Sunday. There is no admission fee.