

PEORIA ART GUILD | PEORIA, ILLINOIS

JANUARY 13, 2006 – FEBRUARY 25, 2006



eight contemporary views

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This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council



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FORWARD BY PAMELA AYRES AND KAZ McCUE



The visual arts provide us with a powerful and exciting language for communicating ideas and sharing emotions. Visual expression relies on a creative process that embraces insight and discovery, an experience first encountered by the artist and then by the viewer. The purpose of an exhibition space is to create an open forum where art can be encountered and considered on an experiential level. This cycle of visual experience directly affects our perceptions and serves to enrich our lives, expand our awareness, and promote understanding. From this perspective, art is a valuable and fundamental component of our culture and the existence of creativity in our communities makes us stronger as a society.



Eight Contemporary Views brings together a group of artists committed to the creative process and dedicated to the cycle of visual experience. The eight visions featured in this exhibition represent four couples from the Peoria / Bloomington area; Barbara Hoffman, Ken Hoffman, Gary Justis, LJ Douglas, Kathryn Capley, Ron Jackson, Pamela Ayres and Kaz McCue. Curated by Pamela Ayres, the exhibition is an eclectic collection of stylistic approaches, material concerns and expressive articulation and seeks to take the pulse of contemporary standards.

Upon walking through the exhibition, the viewer is presented with individual concerns for media, history and concept. Overall, there is an opportunity to make a connection with contemporary life through the extraordinary visualization of these eight artists. From the garishly striking colors to powerfully articulated lines, the viewer is led into the exhibition and the work. And from whimsical interpretations to subtle familiarities, the audience is met with enthusiastic innovation and challenging concepts. Each artist in *Eight Contemporary Views* maintains a high level of integrity in their work and each integrates their experience from the outside world in a presentation that affirms the power of art to inform, inspire, entertain, transform, persuade and beautify.

The challenge for the contemporary curator is to make a connection between the exhibition space, the work displayed there and the communities that are being served. *Eight Contemporary Views* invites an opportunity for a meaningful exchange between artist and viewer and provides an occasion for the integration of experiences from the outside world with those of the inner self. We thank curator Pamela Ayres for the accomplishment of such a monumental task and we thank the Peoria Art Guild and their Exhibition Committee for the opportunity to put our work and our ideas on display for public consideration. This becomes an important exhibition on many levels and we hope you will join us in this celebration of the power of art.

This exhibition was made possible through the efforts of many individuals to whom we would like to extend our gratitude. Special thanks go to the Peoria Art Guild Board of Directors, Exhibition Committee and staff and we would particularly like to thank Gabriel Johnson, Richard Light, Timothy Kaneshiro, Brett Hargesheimer, John Selburg, Erica Buss, and Josh Bell for their assistance with the installation. Cover photography by Kaz McCue with assistance from Charlie Michaels. Catalog design by Kaz McCue.

The Peoria Art Guild exhibitions and programs are supported in part by the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.





BARBARA HOFFMAN

Barbara is a landscape and urban photographer, concentrating on intimate scenic and abstract views. In the last few years, her work has become increasingly abstract and she has been combining related or unrelated images to create new and added dimensions in her work. The surreal quality of many of her single abstract images is being extended through these new combinations. All of her photography is done with natural light, as she feels the time of day and atmospheric conditions are critical to the final image.

KEN HOFFMAN

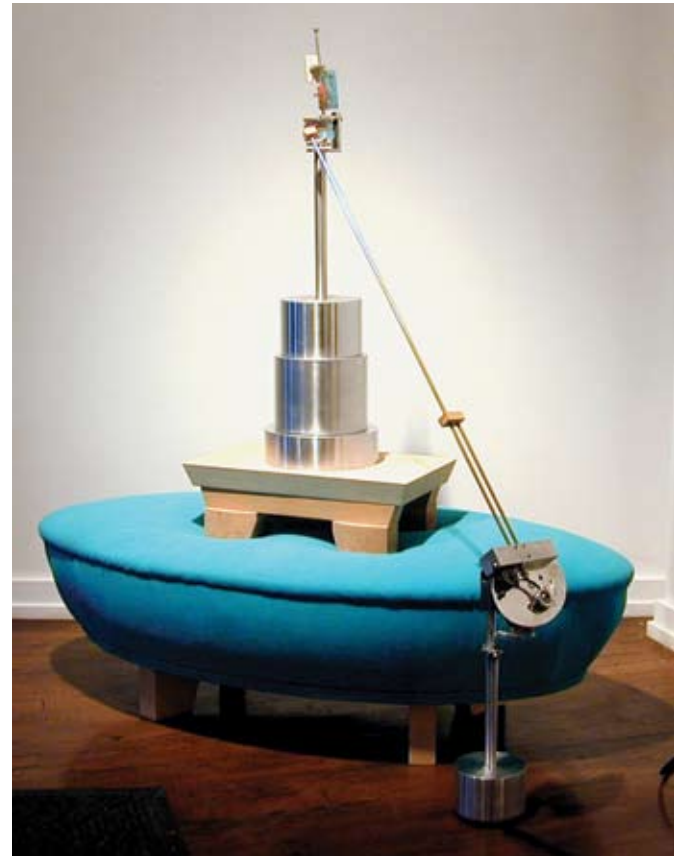
Ken has been working in raku ceramics for over twenty years. All his work is wheel thrown using traditional shapes. He uses a variety of glaze techniques, including slips, low-fire commercial glazes, raku glazes, underglaze colors, and local clays mined from strip pits, streams and rivers. He works as a painter and tries to achieve maximum color effects on each piece, which gives depth and range to the surface. His pieces are fired several times, and sawdust post-reduction firing techniques are used for each pot. He is influenced by Japanese pottery, especially the Tamba and Karatsu periods because of their contemporary execution in both glazing and firing methods.



Luster Bowl, 2005, Raku Ceramics

My investigations and production in the area of sculpture have moved through many phases. In some cases I have addressed only material issues, in some ways my work has been more imitative of the great art that has influenced culture, and still other phases have addressed current issues of the day. Much of my inquiry comes from a curiosity in the history of useful objects. Developing an interest in a science of need where the invention of objects occurs as extensions of the human body has provided fertile ground for exploration. For a useful object to evolve beyond its usefulness is for me, a sculptural experience. I'm looking at an expansion of meaning through time, a metaphor for movement through physical space. My work in kinetics has moved forward, from the 1970' to the present day, along with many investigations into the area of non-kinetic works.

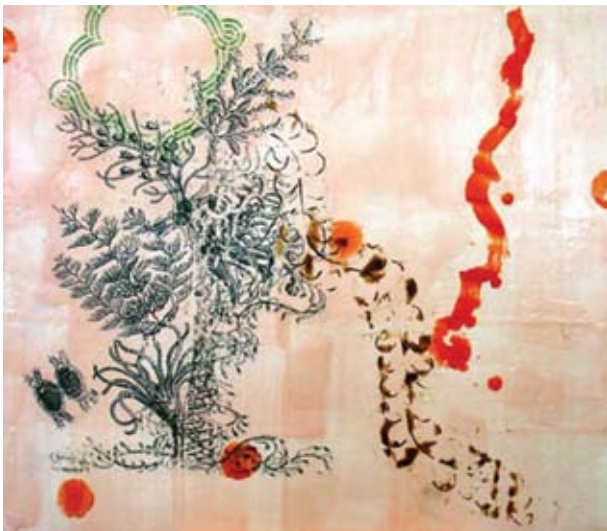
GARY JUSTIS



Left: *Untitled (Mantis)*, 2002, Green Fabric, Wood, and Steel. Right: *First Cake*, 2000, Fabric, Lenticular Images, Motor, and Aluminum



L J Douglas' paintings are created using encaustic, an ancient hot wax paint. This is a deliberate move for Douglas because of wax's historic implications; wax was used to preserve, to cosmetically enhance, and to embalm; practices that are closely linked to the domain of science.



Douglas harvests her imagery from the scientific disciplines of Botany and Biology, using this imagery to create her works by dissecting, re-combining, and finally, re-inventing (an analogous reference to gene splicing), Douglas is closing the distance between science and art. The worlds she creates are neither populated by underwater creatures nor intercellular wonders, but rather located at an imaginary place between macrocosmic and microcosmic worlds.

L J DOUGLAS



KATHRYN CAPLEY

Viewing my work is similar to watching a ballet or sporting event, one becomes empathetically engaged by the energy, power, and expression that is depicted. My sculptures resemble life sized three dimensional gesture drawings. The quality of the line that describes the volume of the horse creates a circumstance of extreme animation. It is difficult to recall a culture that does not demonstrate its reverence for the horse by depicting it in painting, sculpture, mythology, worship, superstition or folklore.



Top: *Equus Caballus*, 2001, Metal Tubing and Paint (Permanent Collection of the Central Illinois Regional Airport, Bloomington, Illinois).
Bottom: *Fox*, 2005, Solid Copper Wire and Paint; and *Walk*, 2005, Metal Tubing and Paint (Private Collection of Gale Byrnes, Hopewell, New Jersey).



I have long thought that cliché, i.e., the recognition of the extremely familiar, is a paradoxical component of inventive, engaging artwork. What elevates familiar content beyond the dullness of cliché is the reinvention of its form/context. This transformation yields the experience of something that seems novel, new, or perhaps even unique, but at the same time is entirely familiar and thereby compelling. The works I present in the show juxtapose a sentimental, mirrored landscape motif with the straight forward painting concerns of Abstract Expressionism. As such, they amusingly evoke romantic idealizations of source and reflection, atmospheric light, and poetically encompassing space.

RON JACKSON



A creative spirit fundamentally pervades throughout acts of expression and intimacy through the experience of the artist's touch. My approach to creating work follows the idea that the perception of all of the materials I use and installations I create are comments of how I understand my own existence and how it could be perceived in society. In formulating environments and selecting materials and objects I am not asking "why am I here" but rather asking "what is my purpose." The collective tasks of sewing, welding and meaningful acts convey strength through an incorporation of elemental and natural symbols that achieve a metaphor for change. When I create objects and come to understand their significance, I utilize them as a part of a symbol system or object vocabulary that expresses ritual, commonplace endeavors and aesthetic apprehension. The assembly of natural and municipal materials generated together form somewhat pervasive environments.

PAMELA AYRES



KAZ MCCUE



I see my role as an artist as that of storyteller, focused on expression and the translation of ideas through the visual language. I am fascinated by the culture of imagery and the complexity of our visual environment supports me in speaking of contemporary issues. My works become psychological and emotional investigations... commentaries filled with narratives, questions, satires, and sarcasms.

I have maintained an interdisciplinary attitude towards my work and utilize a variety of media to visualize my ideas. This interdisciplinary approach allows me to access a diverse and eclectic vocabulary in the creation of my work and the creative process allows me to bring my personality into my work and make it more personal. Through materials and images, I exercise my own sense of curiosity and create stories that are designed to illustrate my own reflections of time and place. By manipulating contents and contexts, I make each piece an abstraction of things we know, see, and understand as a society and tell of our contemporary culture through my own search for meaning.

PAMELA AYRES | PEORIA, ILLINOIS

Pamela Ayres is Director of University Galleries, Exhibitions, and Collections at Bradley University. She received a BFA in Sculpture from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and an MFA in Sculpture, Installation and Performance Art from Long Island University/C.W. Post Campus. Ayres' lists many exhibitions of her own work at museums, galleries and outdoor venues including: Bristol Art Museum, Slater Museum, Hecksher Museum, Tribeca 148 Gallery, Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art, Carnegie Museum of Art, Hillwood Art Museum, Adelphi University Sculpture Biennial and Guandu International Outdoor Sculpture Festival in Taiwan.

KATHRYN CAPLEY | CHENOA, ILLINOIS

Kathryn Capley's work has been shown around the country, has appeared on seven magazine covers, including twice on the Chronicle of the Horse. Her work is included in several collections including: Jaqueline Badger Mars, The Plains, VA; Central Illinois Regional Airport, Bloomington, IL; Stoll, Keenon, and Park, LLP, Lexington, Kentucky; and the permanent collection of the American Academy of Equine Art, Lexington, KY. Kathryn is a full member of the American Academy of Equine Art.

L J DOUGLAS | BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS

The work of L J Douglas has been seen in solo exhibitions at: International Museum of Surgical Science, Art and Design Gallery at the University of Alberta, Art Museum of Southeast Texas, and Eureka College. Her work is in the permanent collections of: the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL; Bibliograph, Montreal, Canada; Johan Deumens Archive, Heemsteede, The Netherlands; and Garage Moderne, Paris, France. Douglas teaches undergraduate and graduate Painting and Drawing at Illinois State University.

BARBARA HOFFMAN | PEORIA, ILLINOIS

Recent exhibitions include: *Silicon Sands Digital Media International*, Museum of Fine Arts, Las Cruces, NM; *National Juried Show*, Washington School of Photography, Bethesda, MD; *Idir Isling – Between Visions International Invitational*, Clonmel, Ireland; *Visual Anthropology International Juried Group Exhibition*, Hardy Center for the Arts, Ephraim, WI; *Contemporary Realism*, Prairie State College, Chicago Heights, IL.

KEN HOFFMAN | PEORIA, ILLINOIS

Ken Hoffman is a part of the Illinois Artisans Program, with venues in Chicago and Whittington, Illinois. He exhibits his ceramic work extensively both regionally and nationally. A noted artist, Hoffman recently retired from full-time teaching at Bradley University

RON JACKSON | CHENOA, ILLINOIS

Ron Jackson received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Richmond Professional Institute and a Master of Fine Arts with distinction from California College of Arts and Crafts. He has been featured in solo exhibitions at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Robinson House Gallery in Richmond, VA, the Nancy Lurie Gallery in Chicago, IL and the Midway Artists Gallery in Bloomington, IL. His work has also been included in exhibitions at O.K. Harris Works of Art in New York City, the Art Institute of Chicago and the Burpee Art Museum in Rockford, IL.

GARY JUSTIS | BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS

Justis earned an MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and is Associate Professor at Illinois State University. He recently finished a major commission for the Illinois State Capital Development Board's Art in Architecture Program, titled *World Engine*. Justis has exhibited work at: Whitney Museum of American Art at Phillip Morris, New Museum of Contemporary Art, and Museum of Contemporary Art. He has been included in numerous exhibitions at private galleries in Chicago, San Francisco and New York. Gary Justis' work is included in collections throughout the United States including: Museum of Modern Art Library; New York City Library (special collections); Museum of Contemporary Art; The School of the Art Institute of Chicago Artist's Books Collection, Alexandria Museum of Art; Illinois State Museum; Borg-Warner Corporation; and U.S. Equities Corporation.

KAZ McCUE | TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

McCue is Director of the University Art Gallery at Indiana State University. He earned a BFA from Parsons School of Design and an MFA from Long Island University / C.W. Post Campus. An experienced artist, educator and curator, McCue has been deeply involved in the arts on many levels from working with inner-city youths to developing artist relations abroad. McCue has curated numerous exhibitions such projects as: *Footcandles: History and Process in Contemporary Photography*, *Against Tradition: Trends in Contemporary Printmaking*, and *Extraordinary Things: A Study of Contemporary Art through Material Culture*. He has received several grants including a recent Indiana Arts Commission Individual Artist Project Grant and his creative work has been included in numerous national and international exhibitions.