

Published Oct 1, 2009

Published Thursday October 1, 2009

## Bemis auction will have diverse art, and lots of it

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WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER



Hotspot Brad at the Pratt Ave. Pier, 2009, Woodblock print, 30in x 49.75in WaTie WHiTe White's drawings were commissioned to become the projected visual backdrop for the recent world premiere of opera omaha's The Blizzard Voices, an oratorio with a libretto by two-time United States poet laureate Ted Kooser and a score provided by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Paul Moravec. The director of the omaha Printmaker's Guild, White's work has been shown widely across the nation and is found in numerous public and private collections. He earned an Mfa from American University in Washington Dc after a Bfa from the Art Institute of Chicago.

The Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts' annual auction is one of the art world's most imaginative recycling programs.

Every year, hundreds of the world's top contemporary artists donate works to the Bemis. Those pieces are then sold and the proceeds funneled into the Bemis' residency program. That program supports the work of a new crop of artists-in-residence, many of whom will go on to donate some of their work back to the Bemis.

About 220 artists will have works on display at the Bemis' 11th Annual Art Auction starting Friday, said Hesse McGraw, the Bemis' curator. They will remain on exhibit through the auction on Nov. 14.

"The volume and diversity of works in the show are pretty overwhelming," McGraw said. "Still, we've been able to tease out relationships among the pieces. Finding those relationships has helped us organize the exhibit."

Works will be on display throughout the center's 10,000-square-foot space, arranged in three main galleries and along the hallway.

The greatest diversity of works is found in the main gallery, which will be used for the silent auction. McGraw has placed some of the show's most appealing abstract works along that gallery's east wall.

Artist Mel Tingley's minimalist painting "Layered" is among the standout works on that wall. Its soothing, turquoise squares are etched with wavelike lines and embellishments.

On the opposite wall, McGraw has arranged the show's surreal and futurist works.

Nolan Tredway's painting "As Fortune Finds It" screams for attention with its depiction of a three-headed whatchamacallit — a beast that looks like a cross between a giraffe and raccoon. Jon Rappleye's black-and-white illustration of starry-eyed owls is more subtle but no less imaginative.

Weird idiosyncrasy was the organizing principle on the north wall, with Craig Roper's "Big Blue B-Girlz" being the most conspicuously wacky. Roper has superimposed his own goofy grin and grizzled, doubled-chinned face on the bodies of several elegantly dressed women.

The live auction gallery includes at least one bona fide masterpiece, Keith Jacobshagen's "Pulling Twilight: Havelock Elevator

Under 10 Inches of Snow.”

Jacobshagen is a contemporary landscape artist whose mastery of light and shading calls to mind the works of Vermeer and the Dutch masters. The impeccable detail and subtle shades in “Pulling Twilight” are breathtaking.

The third gallery is devoted to the works of former Bemis residents. It’s an eclectic showing, featuring everything from Christina Narwicz’s colorful abstract paintings to Deborah Masuoka’s large, totemic and fun sculpture of a rabbit head.

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