

Exposure Unlimited celebrates their twenty-fifth year!

When you think about artists throughout the latter 19th and 20th centuries, many come to mind. Some are special, unique individuals, some are similar connected duos and others are movements/groups of artists joined for their social companionship to create art and for socio-political change energy. Many movements frequently come to mind through exhibitions in famous museums: the Fauves, the Impressionists, the Dadaists, the Surrealists, the Ash Can School, the Bay Area painters, for instance.

Fredericksburg is lucky to be the home of one such group, Exposure Unlimited, working its way to renown on the local art scene for the past twenty-five years. To celebrate the 25th anniversary of showing their adventurous art together, the artist members of Exposure Unlimited will exhibit their varied and unique artwork at two venues on the First Friday art evening in April. Entitled “Then and Now”, this show will encompass two different exhibits with different emphases. “Now” will open at FCCA, 813 Sophia Street, with an exhibit of the artists’ work created especially for the anniversary and introduced by John Nichols at 6 p.m. with a talk in the Gallery. The second exhibit, “Then” mounted at P. Rose Gallery at 709 Caroline Street, will feature a talk at 7:30 p.m. about a work each artist has chosen to exhibit from some time period in the past. This exhibit will also include a time line with photos and collected bits and pieces of the countless art shows where these artists have exhibited.

Led by John Nichols, Jr., Exposure Unlimited began as a group of individual artists showing their artwork together twenty-five years ago. Many of the original members are still showing today. Some have come and gone, but the intrinsic nature of their theory is still evident-- constant, refreshing artwork that pushes the boundaries of art and interests and thrills the public, as well as the artists!

Listening to their discussion about the world of making art, the viewer walks away with a feeling that these individuals are really steadfast in their determination to do it for themselves and as an upfront art education for the people of Fredericksburg and the world through a glimpse at the minds of artists.

In the upcoming shows, John Nichols continues his exploration of mixed media in a still life in a ‘vintage’ box and low medium reliefs on canvas. His work is both nostalgic and questioning.

Paula Rose explains: In “Life Book #1: My Aunt Zella” I have made a mixed media biographical piece about my great aunt. At her death in 1999, I inherited many of her collections which form the basis of this series. In exploring her story, I am also learning my own.

Cathy Herndon explores a theme of water. In one large painting there is a reflection upon the water that dances like small luminaries. Other paintings abstract the view and movements of rivers and water sources.

Heidi Reszies Lewis' painting collages are collections of subjects that are familiar to her. Their layers of images reflect past, present and future.

Another group member with evidence of the "brilliant act of painting" is Betsy Glassie. Well known in the area for her flowers and still life work, Betsy will soothe the eye with paintings that are a celebration of French Gardens. They are influenced by a beautiful garden in the South of France near Nice from a trip I made a number of years ago and Monet's Garden in Giverny.

The iconic image of the Statue of Liberty serves as a springboard for Retta Robbins to explore the facets of the statue in New York harbor who welcomed immigrants to our country. Her inspiration reflects that today we are faced with divisive views of immigration. Turning closer to home, she paints colorful interior views of her abode.

Bob Worthy, whose figurative transfers have been collected internationally, continues his exploration of the figure in mixed media.

Joan Gardner says about her work; "In the past few years I have been painting figures, faces, or objects, on chairs, tables, or wooden panels. Recently I was given an old radio cabinet from maybe the '30's or 40's. Immediately I knew what the subject would have to be about; The Lone Ranger, a great hit during radio days. The piece tells the story of the Lone Ranger with images and written words only. No sound, which is a little ironic since it began on the radio. I like that. The piece is entitled "Radio Days".

David Lovegrove explains; "My work evolves from studying the natural and human-made world around me. I rarely sketch or photograph things that are beautiful or polished, therefore much of the nature and many of the objects are weathered, worn, broken, or deconstructed. I then use the sketches and photographs to generate more abstracted and finished artworks, and to me they are often metaphors for something larger and more important conceptually. The depicted objects represent various important ideas and maintain formal and abstract qualities."

Joan Limbrick uses colors and brush strokes that blend the emotions and feelings of every viewer to instill a meditative reaction. Similar to a De-Ja-Vu, her work transforms the human spirit in a melancholy way.

Also exhibiting with the group at P. Rose Gallery in the "Then" venue are past members Peter Frederick, Betsy Carter, and Elizabeth Butler.

These exhibitions will open with receptions in the galleries April 1, 2011, from 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Visitors are invited to come early for the talks and can view the exhibits anytime through the month of April. Come witness a part of Art History in the making!

Cathy Herndon