IN THESE TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES, JULIE AND AUSTIN HAD A TOUGH CHOICE. NEW CLOTHES OR STUDIO MEMBERSHIP? NO CONTTEST.
An arts life well lived and still going strong

Why the coach deserved a car and not the other teachers struck him as unfair. He said that literature has meant so much to him throughout his life.

"Well, I have an ongoing war with the local media — at least in my mind," he said. "I read the newspaper every day and have done for 80 years.

Herman's show at the Beaumont Art League in May is more than a simple art retrospective. It is a visual and written biography. He plans to have photos, writings, scrapbooks, paintings, newspaper clippings, all of which he uses to illustrate one point or another.

"There are things that are human being on Earth that doesn't have a lot of interesting things about that person," he said. "There's no such thing as a hammer-wielding little home town."

Herman was born Jan. 21, 1921 in Strawberry, Ark. The family moved to the Texas Panhandle when he was six.

"I remember growing up in the panhandle, and me and the other boys would say, 'If I ever get out of this blankety-blank place, I'll never come back here,'" he said, laughing at the memory of it.

Even at 88, Herman looks fit. Despite his small stature, he carries himself like the body-builder he used to, a passion he picked up when he went to boot camp in Virginia.

"We trained with the Marines," he said. "I was very much husky and strong then. I was really into bodybuilding, it was my passion. And I had quite a physique when I was 20 years old.

"I got to go to home, but you couldn't take a troop train and get to Anacostia and back in five days so I went to Washington, D.C. — that was the first time I went to the National Gallery and the Smithsonian. Then I went over to York, Pennsylvania, which is still famous as the home of York Barbell Clubs — Bob Hoffman, publisher of 'Strength and Health' magazine, was big into bodybuilding before Schwarzenegger was born, probably so I got to work out in the YMCA with some of those guys who were national champs.

He was then stationed in California near Malibu. He said Armand and Vic Trenier had a gym and allowed him to work out for free. Herman and Armand got to be close friends and worked out together. Armand eventually won the Mr. America contest.

"But I never got on steroids," he said. "I don't think they even had them back then.

After the war, Herman returned home and went to school at West Texas State University for writing. He then attended the University of Houston, majoring in art.

Interviewing with Herman is simple, mainly because he has done very little work. Just turn the recorder on and relax as he moves from one story to the next.

"I tell you, I get sick to my stomach watching pro-football and the announcing men up there — it takes four or five of them — they praise and talk about gods out there on the football field. It turns me off," he said.

He tells a story about his high school football coach being presented with a car during halftime of a game at the conclusion of a successful season.

"Now I had admiration for the coach, but the other teachers meant so much in my life, especially the literature teacher who introduced me to memorizing good poetry," he said.

"I read the newspaper every day and have done for 80 years."
Festival to kick off at TASI May 15

Christopher Dombrosky of Nederland said with original films and performing artists, this year’s event promises to be bigger and better than last year.

“We’re going to showcase nearly twenty-five different musical acts from as far away as California and screen dozens of films, four of which are feature-length movies shot right here in Southeast Texas.”

Full length features by local filmmakers include “The Messenger: 360 Days of Bolivar,” a docu-drama shot during Hurricane Ike by Houston filmmaker Shawn Wellsing, comedy “Flying Solo” from director Tiana Hailey, a drama written and directed by Paul Floyd called “The Last Man,” and horror film “Curse of Sarah Jane Road” from director Derek Womack.

Dombrosky said Lamar University will be hosting a filmmaking competition at this year’s Boomtown Film and Music Festival.

“Professor O’Brien Stanley of the Lamar Communications Department’s film program is organizing a unique event called the ‘Real Time 24 Hour Video Race,’” he said. “Starting on April 24, teams of students will have exactly one day to write, shoot, score and edit a three minute film.

The winner will be announced two weeks later during the BoomFest awards ceremony and all entries will be screened at the Jefferson Theatre.

“We’re going to showcase nearly twenty-five different musical acts from as far away as California and screen dozens of films, four of which are feature-length movies shot right here in Southeast Texas.”

TASI to host playwriting festival May 23

The first “Your 8 x 10 Goes Here” playwriting competition was met with dozens of entries from all over the United States. Eight winners were chosen and many of them are locals, with pieces ranging from science fiction to sitcom style to a period piece.

Joanna Clark, director of Take A Bow Theater, which is affiliated with The Art Studio, said that she is thrilled with the results of the infant competition.

“We were joking at the beginning that we hope we at least get nine plays so we could have eight winners and an honorable mention,” she said.

The company received more than nine plays and the judges chose the winners through a blind process developed by Clark.

“To prevent bias, I had a completely blind judging system for the panel. As the plays came in, I took off the cover sheet and gave it a letter of the alphabet, and then I put that letter on every page of the script and then the score sheets. That’s how I keep it all separate,” she said.

The judges are professionals from everywhere in the country. “I tried to get people who would be detached and also those who weren’t already working with anyone at the time,” she said. “As we expand the project, we’ll try and get more high-profile judges, because they’re sort of immune.”

The eight winners, in no particular order, are Christopher Bausselle of Nederland, for “Seven Notes and a Gun;” Kyle Romero of Orange, for “Moose, Indiana;” Christopher James Murray of Beaumont, for “The Hat Trick;” Nathan Stychnik of Groves, for “Robotica;” Andy Coughlan of Orange, for “A Single Drop;” Adam E. Douglas of Fayetteville, Ark., for “Stand Up;” Beth Gallaway of Beaumont, for “Some Assembly Required;” and Gil Nelson of Sherman, for “For All Times End.”

An honorable mention goes out to Christopher Bausselle for his play “Executive Pay.”

After speaking with the winners, Clark found out that they range in age from a college senior to a man with more than 30 years experience in television and radio.

All eight winning plays will be presented during the 8x10 Playwriting Festival at The Art Studio on May 23.

Clark said that the lighting at The Studio is relatively simple, so that aspect is pretty much set.

“In a 10-minute play, you don’t get very elaborate with sets, because they have to come up and down very fast,” she said. “However, we will costume and the sets are minimal. That’s fortunate in my point of view to be able to do the shows quickly and all in one day.”

The directors have already been chosen and have been instructed to be as artistic as possible, Clark said.

“This will be a professional credit for all directors, actors and technicians involved. This was a national competition – not an in-house project.”

Some of the playwrights chosen have also been tapped to be directors for plays other than their own.

As an author herself, Clark said that it’s very difficult for playwrights to remain objective as directors of their own work. “We’ve probably had
JONATHON JONES SITS QUIETLY in his small house. Interviews are something he endures rather than enjoys. Ebony, his black cat, curls up in his lap acting as a protective barrier from the intrusion of the digital recorder.

Jones’ discomfort at his interrogation is understandable. He is a man who speaks through his paintings and having to verbalize what is essentially visual is difficult.

Born in Dallas, he grew up in Southeast Texas and has spent a lifetime drawing and exploring his creativity. He started painting in 2001. “I had never done it before but had done drawings,” he said. “I had been drawing since I was little.”

Although he has not had formal training, he has developed his style through experimentation over the years. And he is quick to study the techniques of artists he comes across. “I wasn’t really exposed to a lot of different artists growing up. One that I did find, that I keep going back to, is Salvador Dalí,” he said.

Jones said he didn’t think that his work really reflected Dalí, but viewers with a keen eye can spot a kinship in the way his semi abstracted figures have fluidity and movement, reminiscent of the Spanish master’s anthropomorphic shapes.

Jones stumbled across Dalí’s work through a screen-print shop to make money. He has worked there, on and off, for 15 years. “That’s a very basic way to describe my work. The color tones,” he said. “I don’t think I ever got too wild as far as color goes.”

Most of his work is concept-based, he said, focusing on abstract human forms. “The title, ‘Transmogrify,’ means to change form — especially into something fantastic or bizarre,” Jones said.

“That’s a very basic way to describe my work. The feeling behind it would be that we all have chances to change. Everyday throws you new obstacles so you are constantly changing.”

When he is not painting he works at a Jubi Prints, a screen-print shop to make money. He has worked there, on and off, for 15 years. “They are great people to work for,” he said.

“Anytime I need time off for my art or anything they understand.”

“Anytime I need time off for my art or anything they understand.”

Ultimately, he said he paints to occupy his time — “and it’s kind of therapy, too.”

He is always drawing, he said, until an idea takes shape, an idea that he feels is worth developing.

“I’ll do a brainstorm page, which is basically just a whole bunch of doodles,” he said. “I’ll pick from those and revise the ones that I like and make changes. Sometimes a concept grows there and I’ll just modify it to work with what I want, things that need building.”

Jones had a show at The Art Studio in 2004 and, while it was a success, he said he learned some lessons. “Basically, my last show was all over the place,” he said. “It didn’t have any real direction. With this one, I am trying to get a really good, together show. I want the works to have a commonality.”

The works in “Transmogrify” share a color palette, a subtle blend of yellows and browns.

“I think if you look back, it’s always earthy tones,” he said. “I don’t think I ever got too wild as far as color goes.”

“History Repeating.”

IN MAY

“Transmogrify” opens with a free reception 7-10 p.m., May 2 and runs through May 30 at The Art Studio, Inc., 720 Franklin in downtown Beaumont. For more information, call 409-836-5393.

“Yesterday,” left is one of three paintings comprising “History Repeating.”

Nathan Jones, previous page, sits in front of one of “The Twins.”

“Hollow Landscape,” far left, is one of the images Jones will display during “Transmogrify” at The Art Studio in May.

Jones and his cat Prada, below, in front of “The Twins,” a pair of companion paintings.
LU art students present theses

Lamar University art students are showcasing their projects in the Senior Thesis Exhibition through May 14 in the Dishman Art Museum. Students featured are Trushala Adam, Jack Comeau, Jillian Day, Robert Day, Katy DuBuison, Patricia Gil de Garcia, Sarah Manning and Anna Myers.

“The students come up with a project and work on it all semester,” painting, drawing, graphic design, sculpture, it’s all there,” Lynn Lemke, professor of art history, said.

The exhibition is one part of the senior thesis required for students to graduate with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in art. They are also required to write a research paper and conduct an oral presentation and defense in front of a faculty committee.

Patrizia Gil de Garcia, is creating a unique and timely display of mixed media to represent the apathy of government toward its citizens. "The thing that is different about my work is that it is a combination of sculpture and drawing,” she said, citing artist John Woodward as one of her influences. Panels of sculptured faces are surrounded by drawings depicting recent unsettling events; such as homelessness, school shootings, a mother drowning her children in a bathtub, and corruption of the government to these problems,” she added. “They have no eyes or ears, which represents that they see no evil, hear no evil.”

Gil de Garcia said she came up with the idea after seeing disturbing headlines in the news and wondering why no one was taking initiative to create it. “I am a mother – I have two sons, so I am always wondering why no one is doing anything they can do,” she said. “The piece is black and white, “not only to emphasize the darkness of each situation,” she said. "They have no eyes or ears, which represents that they see no evil, hear no evil.”

Gil de Garcia said she came up with the idea after seeing disturbing headlines in the news and wondering why no one was taking initiative to change things. She said that having children makes people more aware of the dangers in the world. "It is an opportunity for HCP to support the work of artists and assist in allowing them opportunities to make new work,” the center’s Web site states. "There is a cash award and the agreement is that the artist will create new work for a one-person exhibition. The process is one of application. Hundreds of artists from all over the country apply. Every year HCP chooses a juror with a national/international reputation to select the two fellowship winners. This year it was Natasha Egan, Director/Curator from the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago.”

The Houston Center for Photography is located at 1441 W. Alabama in Houston. For more information, call 713-529-4755, or visit www.hcponline.org.
State University

“I got interested in art in 1989, the first year we were in the (Pacific) islands,” he said. “I was in the Solomon Islands continuous for 24 months with no R&R.

“We had no art in my little high school. Like one student who would read a book and tell us the story in his art class the next day. It was always a good one. And I remember one time we went to a museum in Victoria and it was all foxholes. And I remember there was a piece of art that was a foxhole. And I remember the art class was the only thing that was interesting in that whole museum.”

Herman’s digressions are always relevant and insightful. His view of life is almost a mystic’s view, a view of the world that is both spiritual and secular. It is a view of the world that is both beautiful and tragic.

Herman’s view is that the world is a place of beauty and tragedy. It is a place where good and evil coexist. It is a place where love and hate coexist. It is a place where life and death coexist. It is a place where joy and sorrow coexist. It is a place where hope and despair coexist. It is a place where the good and the bad coexist. It is a place where the just and the unjust coexist. It is a place where the wise and the foolish coexist. It is a place where the strong and the weak coexist. It is a place where the healthy and the sick coexist.

Herman’s view is that the world is a place of beauty and tragedy. It is a place where good and evil coexist. It is a place where love and hate coexist. It is a place where life and death coexist. It is a place where joy and sorrow coexist. It is a place where hope and despair coexist. It is a place where the good and the bad coexist. It is a place where the just and the unjust coexist. It is a place where the wise and the foolish coexist. It is a place where the strong and the weak coexist. It is a place where the healthy and the sick coexist.
The Art Museum of Southeast Texas is bringing a diverse trio of artists to its galleries for the spring exhibition. From April 25 through July 12, visitors will explore small line drawings telling intimate stories of talented art professor Charlotte Cosgrove, large scale mixed media sculptures of former boat builder and New Orleans artist Jeff Jennings, and an intense investigation of religious experiences through color and texture by AMSET curator Ray Daniel.

“Each of these exhibitions is distinctive and impinging in their own right,” AMSET Curator of Exhibitions and Collections Sarah Hamilton, said.

“A Transitory Realm” by Charlotte Cosgrove

“A Transitory Realm” features two series of drawings — a collection of narrative works and ink drawings by Cosgrove, a Houston-based artist. The narrative drawings are stories, both real and surreal; they are mysterious, depicting situations, crises and tragic events. These images are psychologically charged and comment on life’s unpredictability, Melissa Tilley, AMSET spokesperson, said, in a press release.

According to Cosgrove, the ink drawings began as a challenge to see how many different line configurations could be formed. She began making marks and lines spontaneously, drawing from her own experiences or things seen on daily walks. Then she began to focus on making a new set of ink drawings with specific objectives. The images became hybrids of orchids, birds, sea, life, and objects that were explored and abstracted. The tension and uncertainty cropping up in these works grew up on the Maine coast. He earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Museum School Art in Portland, Ore. In 1980, Jennings worked in Maine and Massachusetts as a wooden boat builder and cabinet-maker and a year later moved to New Orleans. He then earned a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of New Orleans in 1990. Following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Jennings moved to Houston, where he currently lives and works.

His sculpture is reminiscent of totemic figures, but he engages in a spiritual or emotional dialogue with his art, Jennings said. He comments, “My paintings are visual investigations of personal, social, cultural, and religious imagery. They address the dichotomy between the abstract and the representational; the clear and the ambiguous; the coherence and the chaos. The dichotomy is a universal theme prevalent in Jennings’ artwork, Tilley said.

Jennings was born in Belfast, Maine in 1953 and grew up on the Maine coast. He earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Museum School Art in Portland, Ore. In 1980, Jennings worked in Maine and Massachusetts as a wooden boat builder and cabinet-maker and a year later moved to New Orleans. He then earned a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of New Orleans in 1990. Following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Jennings moved to Houston, where he currently lives and works.

Hampton said. “A Transitory Realm” by Charlotte Cosgrove

“A Transitory Realm” features two series of drawings — a collection of narrative works and ink drawings by Cosgrove, a Houston-based artist. The narrative drawings are stories, both real and surreal; they are mysterious, depicting situations, crises and tragic events. These images are psychologically charged and comment on life’s unpredictability, Melissa Tilley, AMSET spokesperson, said, in a press release.

According to Cosgrove, the ink drawings began as a challenge to see how many different line configurations could be formed. She began making marks and lines spontaneously, drawing from her own experiences or things seen on daily walks. Then she began to focus on making a new set of ink drawings with specific objectives. The images became hybrids of orchids, birds, sea, life, and objects that were explored and abstracted. The tension and uncertainty cropping up in these works grew up on the Maine coast. He earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Museum School Art in Portland, Ore. In 1980, Jennings worked in Maine and Massachusetts as a wooden boat builder and cabinet-maker and a year later moved to New Orleans. He then earned a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of New Orleans in 1990. Following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Jennings moved to Houston, where he currently lives and works.

His sculpture is reminiscent of totemic figures, but he engages in a spiritual or emotional dialogue with his art, Jennings said. He comments, “My paintings are visual investigations of personal, social, cultural, and religious imagery. They address the dichotomy between the abstract and the representational; the clear and the ambiguous; the coherence and the chaos. The dichotomy is a universal theme prevalent in Jennings’ artwork, Tilley said.

Jennings was born in Belfast, Maine in 1953 and grew up on the Maine coast. He earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Museum School Art in Portland, Ore. In 1980, Jennings worked in Maine and Massachusetts as a wooden boat builder and cabinet-maker and a year later moved to New Orleans. He then earned a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of New Orleans in 1990. Following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Jennings moved to Houston, where he currently lives and works.

His sculpture is reminiscent of totemic figures, but he engages in a spiritual or emotional dialogue with his art, Jennings said. He comments, “My paintings are visual investigations of personal, social, cultural, and religious imagery. They address the dichotomy between the abstract and the representational; the clear and the ambiguous; the coherence and the chaos. The dichotomy is a universal theme prevalent in Jennings’ artwork, Tilley said.

Jennings was born in Belfast, Maine in 1953 and grew up on the Maine coast. He earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Museum School Art in Portland, Ore. In 1980, Jennings worked in Maine and Massachusetts as a wooden boat builder and cabinet-maker and a year later moved to New Orleans. He then earned a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of New Orleans in 1990. Following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Jennings moved to Houston, where he currently lives and works.
When you support The Art Studio with your membership, you receive ISSUE, Southeast Texas' and Southwest Louisiana's alternative press as well as class schedules, invitations to opening receptions and various Studio functions.

Volunteers

These people are the lifeblood of our organization. We COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

To volunteer, drop by The Art Studio, Inc., or call 409-838-5393.

Bryan Castino
Katy Harenc
Heather Eager
Renee Bertrand
Clint Dearborn
Rhonda Redman
Sue Wright
Cindy Gomes
Rhonda McNally
Andy Coughlan
Rene Coughlan
Olivia Rusceno
Jannell Rigaldo
Urah Kesterson
Les Warren
Tasha
Colleen Bonnin
Beth Gallapp
Lige
Joanna Clark
Chris Dombrowsky
Terri McKusker
Willie McKusker
Sheila Molandes
Deborah Ragsdale
Colby Duhe
Beau Dumesnil
Karen Dumesnil

GIVE US A CALL AT 409-838-5393 OR DROP BY THE ART STUDIO, INC. 720 FRANKLIN, BEAUMONT, TEXAS 77701