

# ISSUE

THE ARTS MAGAZINE OF THE ART STUDIO, INC.

MARCH 2011



**'CRAFTING'  
NEW IMAGES**

PAGE 8

INSIDE:  
DRAWING WITH MOLTEN GLASS,  
SOUTHEAST TEXANS AT AMSET,  
BABWRAP, AND MORE.





ISSUE photos by Andy Coughlan



# IMAGINARIUM WRAP

Story by  
Beth  
Gallaspy

A magical imaginarium of whimsy and wonder awaited those lucky enough to attend The Art Studio Inc.’s 2011 Beaux Arts Ball on Jan. 22 at the American Legion Hall, Post 33, in downtown Beaumont. The ball committee, led by Christopher Plaunty and Trisha Faye Duhe, transformed the hall into a feast for the eyes fitting of the theme,

Welcome to the Imaginarium. Guests entered through a magic mirror into a colorful cellophane forest before visiting a fortune teller, entering an exotic tent housing scrumptious snacks and relaxing on the magic carpets of the hookah lounge. Revelers embraced the theme with eye-popping costumes rivaling the décor of the room – masked men in mysterious capes, enormous wigs that Marie Antoinette would envy, black swans, white swans, butterflies, feathered lions, fezzes, googly eyes, and, of course, tuxes and stunning gowns. The dance floor filled with hoop dancing, fire dancing, belly dancing and just dance-dance-

dancing as the Prime Time Band played and DJ Troy Morvant kept the tunes coming in between. Most importantly, the Beaux Arts Ball raised money to support the programs of The Art Studio, a non-profit that relies on memberships, donations and fund-raising events like the ball for survival. Final tallies were not available at press time. “We’re still getting checks,” said board chair Elizabeth French more than two weeks after the ball. However, initial figures suggest this year’s ball raised even more than the 2010 event, which brought in more than \$5,000. Initial plans already are being made for next year’s Beaux Arts Ball in January 2012. If you would like to help, contact The Art Studio. Special thanks go to the many people whose contributions made the 2011 Beaux Arts Ball a success. Underwriters provided donations to help cover costs including the venue, band, sound equipment and printing. Businesses and individuals donated delicious treats for guests and unique items for the unforgettable silent auction.

Please let these individuals and businesses know how much you appreciate their support of The Art Studio Inc.

- Regina Rogers, in memory of Torchy  
Christina Delgadillo and Josh Crawford  
Stacey Weaver  
Jane Roberts  
Tolunay Wong Engineers Inc.  
Cynthia Fontenot  
Katharine & Co.  
Seafood Lover  
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Trisha Faye Duhe  
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Roy Bares  
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Classic Designs  
The Grill  
Les Warren  
Jodie Leigh

## CALL FOR ENTRIES DEADLINE MARCH 26

TASIJAE

THE ART STUDIO, INC. MEMBERS JUORED ART EXHIBITION

**CALENDAR**  
Entry dates .....March 22-26  
Jury selection .....March 27  
Notification by mail.....March 31  
Pick-up works not accepted..April 1 by 5 p.m.  
Opening/awards reception.....April 2, 7-10 p.m.  
Pick up exhibited work .....May 3-5.

**ELIGIBILITY**  
Open to all members in good standing of The Art Studio, Inc. (TASI). Membership fee of \$35 may be paid at time of entry. Works completed within the last two years that have not previously been shown at TASI may be submitted. All two dimensional work must be ready to hang (**wires, not sawtooths**). All three dimensional work must have firm base. Work may not exceed two hundred pounds in weight or 10 feet in height. Completed entry label must be firmly attached to the back upper left corner of 2-D work or base of 3-D work.

**SUBMISSIONS**  
Entries must be delivered to TASI, 720 Franklin, Beaumont, TX, M-F between the hours of 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. No works will be accepted after 4 p.m. on March 26. Deliveries by bus not accepted. Works must be shipped prepaid and/or hand delivered. Limit two (2) entries per person.

**RETURN OF ALL ENTRIES**  
Work not accepted must be picked up by 4 p.m. on April 1. Works selected for exhibition must remain on display until April 30 and be picked up by May 5.

**AGREEMENT**  
Although the greatest possible care will be exercised in handling work, TASI accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to work submitted, while in transit or on premises. TASI reserves the right to photograph submitted works for publicity purposes. Submission of entries implies the artist’s understanding and agreement to the rules and conditions of the exhibition.

**AWARDS**  
1st. place...A solo exhibition at TASI, May 2012  
2nd. place \$75, 3rd. place \$50

**JUROR**  
Jeff Forster  
Ceramics Department Chair  
Glassell School of Art

# Drawing mid-air with molten glass

JENINE BRESSNER’S “INVERTED HARMONY” AT THE HOUSTON CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY CRAFT

“I aim to make things that reflect my respect and awe for the natural world, my quiet sadness for our uncertain future, and the paradox of humans trying to control and recreate nature itself in artwork that can only strive to be as beautiful as authentic life.”

*Jenine Bressner artist’s statement.*

Commentary by  
Elena  
Ivanova

LAWNDALE ART CENTER WAS packed beyond capacity on Saturday night of Jan. 22. The organizers of the screening of Paythe Levine’s film “Handmade Nation” had grossly underestimated the interest in contemporary craft among Houstonians and their neighbors. The prudent early-comers had the luxury of watching the film seated, while the fashionably-late-comers squatted

in the aisles and along the walls.

Author, artist and curator Paythe Levine traveled to fifteen cities around the country and interviewed forty-four practitioners of the branch of contemporary art known as “indie” (“independent craft”) and DIY (do it yourself.) In the introduction to the book of the same name, which preceded the making of the film, director and screenwriter Andrew Wagner summed up the essence of this anti-mass production movement in the following way: “Making your own clothes, your own dinnerware, your own art has become a way to politely (or maybe not so politely) give “the man” the middle finger, for lack of a better term.”

The film showcases a diverse array of items, from clothing to jewelry to house decor, many of which were mind-boggling and out-of-this-world. I caught myself thinking of haute-couture shows, although these two areas of contemporary culture could not be more different from each other in both spirit and purpose. I had the recurrent thought, “I could never wear this!” flashing through my mind.

It is quite logical to mentally “try on” clothes or jewelry featured in a fashion or art show. After all, it is called “wearable art.” However, I think that in this name the word “art” is of prime importance and “wearable” is secondary to it. It does not matter if I personally like to have a certain item in my wardrobe. If it is a work of art, it should be assessed with the same criteria as we apply to other works of art, such as a painting or a sculpture.

But what are these criteria? We are much more comfortable talking about formal and conceptual elements in reference to traditional art. However, when it comes to contemporary art, we often find ourselves at a loss. And then there are nagging questions about art versus craft, as eternal as “to be or not to be.” Is this art or craft? Do art and craft have equal standing? Does craft apply only to handmade objects or machine-made as well?

Still pondering these and many other questions, I joined the crowd at the Center for Contemporary Craft for the second feature of the evening, a talk by one of the artists interviewed in the film, Jenine Bressner. Her installation, “Inverted Harmony,” is one of the Center’s current exhibitions. Her medium of choice is glass and she holds a B.F.A. from Rhode Island School of Design. In 2010, she graduated from Fab Academy, a pilot program taught via international videoconference from MIT and the Institute for Advanced Architecture in Catalonia.

In the film, we see Jenine Bressner working on glass beads in her studio. I have to confess that I was so fascinated by the glass-



RAIN by Janine Bressner

See BRESSNER on page 11

# WORLD CLASS



## AMSET ‘CROSS-CURRENTS’ EXHIBIT HIGHLIGHTS SETX ARTISTS

Review by  
Andy  
Coughlan

MANY PEOPLE MAY BELIEVE that in order to see quality art one must visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Prado in Madrid, the Louvre in Paris or the Tate Gallery in London.

Sure, they’ve got some nice stuff. But don’t sell Southeast Texas short. Whether you are looking for Cubism, Surrealism, Fauvism, Abstract Expressionism, or any of the myriad isms that make up history of 20th-century art, there’s a Southeast Texas artist who was on it — often the same artist was exploring the major movements as they came along.

Don’t believe me? A quick trip to the Art Museum of Southeast Texas is all the proof you need. The exhibition “Southeast Texas Art: Cross-Currents and Influences, 1925-1965,” features nearly 200 works by local artists and covers the entire spectrum of 20th-century art.

Several works by Maudee Carrón demonstrate the depth of understanding of the major art movements of the century. Next to the front entrance is “Magic Script #1,” which mirrors Kandinsky in its fluid composition. Across the gallery, Carrón’s “Lavender Blue” fuses pre-drip Jackson Pollock with early Piet Mondrian. Below it is a Paul Klee-inspired piece of whimsy, “Untitled (Caricatures)” by Merle Cox.

Carrón is also well represented by

“Renaissance,” a beautiful watercolor that has undertones of Bonnard and Schiele, a beautiful hybrid that is referential yet still completely its own.

Everywhere one turns, one’s senses are assaulted by a variety of diverse artworks hung salon style. One could argue that there are almost too many, but the sheer scope of the exhibition makes up for being slightly overwhelming. Besides, it will force the visitor to make frequent trips — there is no way to take it all in otherwise.

Local artist and mentor Herman Hugg has a strong presence in the room, both with his own work and with the works he owns. The two-headed sculpture “The Memory” by Herring Coe being a particular standout for its workmanship. Hugg is represented by several sculptures incorporating found objects and wood, as well as several paintings, most notably “Foxhole,” an expressionist piece from 1947, which he is proud to say once hung on the same wall as work by Max Ernst. It is one degree of separation from one of the giants of modern art.

David and Patricia Cargill, two stalwarts of the Southeast Texas art scene are well represented. David’s impressive sculpture, “Abstract,” is a modern twist on the primitive fetishes. Patricia shows the influence of cubism in the area with “Untitled (Cubist Woman),” a piece



THE MEMORY, by Herring Coe, is one of the almost 200 works by Southeast Texas artists on display at AMSET through April 3.

See REVIEW on page 14

ISSUE photos by Andy Coughlan

# Shattering the Image:



Story by  
Lluvia  
Rueda

THE PIECES ARE DECEPTIVELY simple.

Clean, smooth lines merge into a symphony of textures often accentuated by common objects: a leaf, some spoons, bits of paper and white buttons.

Most of Fu Chia-Wen Lien's projects are boxed neatly in frames, ready to line up in polite rows along the gallery's white-washed walls. But her collection's precise craftsmanship and clever, biting titles dispel the aura of innocence and draw the viewers in by its intricate structures. Her pieces also explore the unedited view of feminist philosophies by challenging socially-accepted conventions and subtly questioning gender roles with simple wording.

"I try to make them meaningful, rather than just self-expression, to have something that most people can relate to. I want my work



## *a journey into the feminist perspective*

to reflect the experiences and processes of daily life," Lien, a native of Taiwan, said during a recent phone interview.

She will reveal her latest experiences with the greater Beaumont area during her show, "Love of Labor.Art of Craft," at The Art Studio, Inc. in Beaumont, March 5–26. A free reception will kick off opening night from 7–10 p.m.

Lien has great hopes for the collection, which will feature a variety of mixed-media craft projects. Lest any confusion result, the artist herself defines her artistic endeavors as "crafts." The former Southeast Texas resident said that she hopes to shine light on the little-hailed art of crafting.

"It would be the same endeavor for pursuing decoration, handicraft...bringing life to the experiences as a woman and human being."

The "Orange Peel" series underlines her efforts to remain close to home by the use of organic material, which Lien shapes into imaginative designs through free association and the use of natural shapes and textures.

She also celebrates the complexity of the collage-cutting process through the works "Four Seasons" and "Bird Flower Painting," in which Lien reconciles her traditional Asian poetry and motif background with the pop of Western art.

As she established herself in the academic world, Lien refrained from publishing her art until the early 1990s, when she decided to spearhead her first one-woman show in the Space II gallery in Taipei, Taiwan.

"I had a great breakthrough for starting the method-collage with found objects and paper-cutting. The combination of the feminist sensibility with the 1950s love of decoration and material seems somewhat of an oxymoron. But Lien argues against that rigid stance.

"In this I incorporated more of the craftsmanship, the arts-and-crafts approach to art. There was a time when that type of art was frowned on by the critics, but since the women's liberation and artistic movement in the 1970s, you see a lot of that type of stuff — knitting, beading, kitchen tools, etc. — being used as a more common type of media," she said.

Lien usually employs objects she finds around

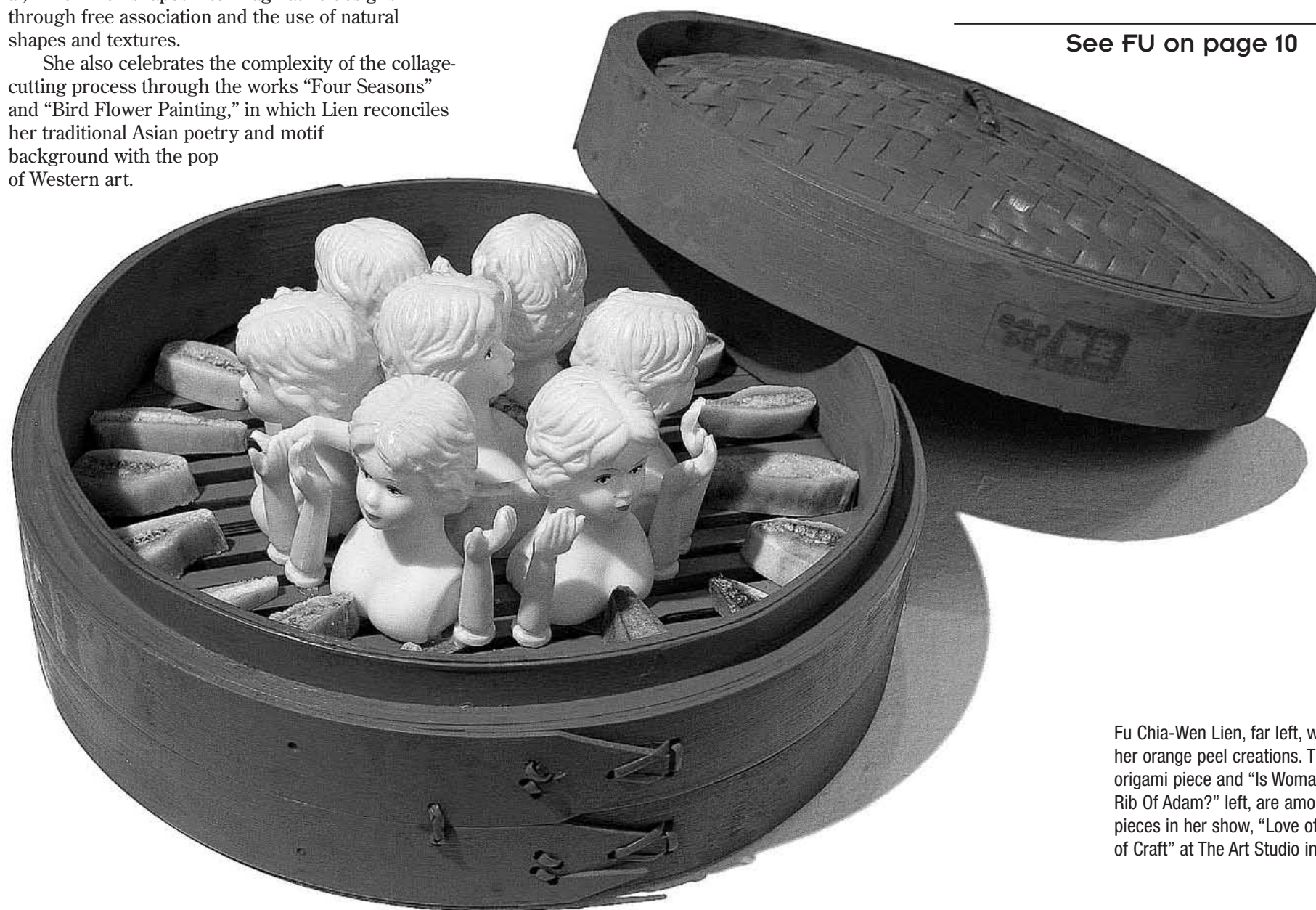
the house, collecting them until she finds a source of inspiration.

"I think that one day all things are destined to become art, or form art. Like ribs," laughed Lien.

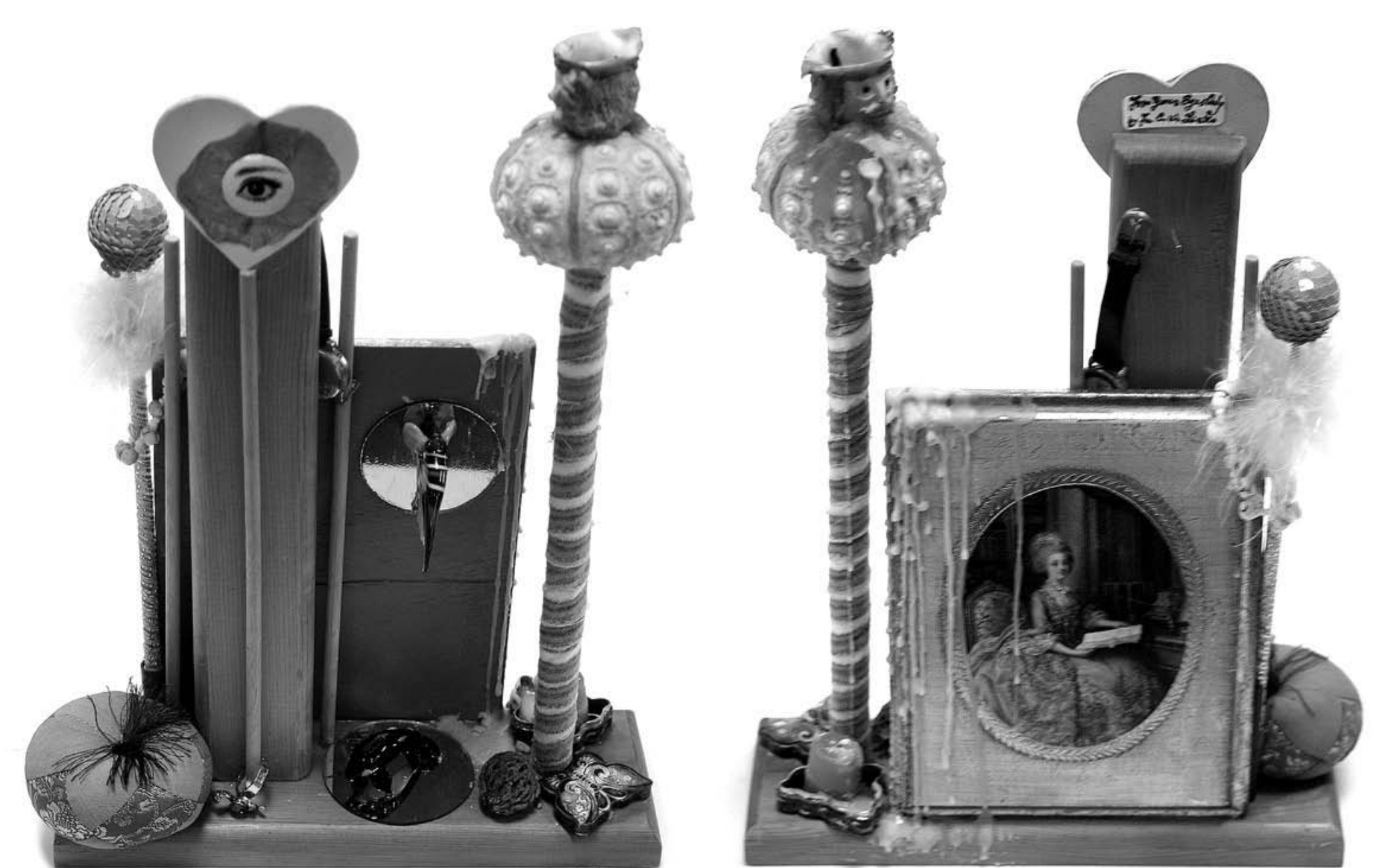
One of her strongest titles, "Is Woman Just A Rib of Adam?" consists of a vaguely diorama-like setting in a red rice steamer; vinyl doll busts float in the midst of circling rib slices, their detached arms upraised in a synchronized, questioning manner. Lien said the "Rib" piece is the summation of her progression in art development.

"I tried to address different perspectives and symbolism with the 'Ribs' work. For instance, the ribs obviously refer to the Christian story of Adam and Eve; they also symbolize strength and last forever. Also, it alludes to the fact that most of the major religions are male-oriented and male dominated, and how it affects a woman's standing socially and morally, according to their standards."

See FU on page 10



Fu Chia-Wen Lien, far left, with one of her orange peel creations. The untitled origami piece and "Is Woman Just A Rib Of Adam?" left, are among the pieces in her show, "Love of Labor.Art of Craft" at The Art Studio in March.



FOR YOUR EYES ONLY by Fu Chia-Wen Lien. Below is one of her orange-peel figures.

FU from page 9

The heavy influences of Dadaism and a post-structuralist view of gender and sexual and political equality in her work echo of third-wave feminist theory, which tries to strip away accepted ‘feminine labels.’

Lien said that the women’s sexual revolution and the fight for civil rights opened a gateway for many women artists during the early 1970s, but their establishment in the art world remains limited.

“We (feminists) have to try to break the myth of genius in all fields. The term ‘genius’ takes on a slanted definition, particularly when it comes to art: it is politically and economically oriented, and is based on male traditions and rules,” she said, alluding to art critic Linda Nochkin’s plea in the 1971 article, “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?”

Less than 20 percent of women artists currently display their work in galleries, Lien said. In the Houston location during the time of Lien’s tour, less than 10 percent of the artists were women.

To underline the current feminist crisis in art galleries and museums, Lien took her students to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, during her tenure at Lamar University.

“I am trying to make people stop and think about what we consider “normal.”

But Lien, an assistant professor in Art History-Global Art at Alfred University in New York, hesitates to label her themes as a purely political ideology and instead views her creations with a critical eye.

“I explore my ideas based on the inspiration of craft and art and daily experiences. You sort of work along the way; it’s not “supposed” to be. It is not better predestined because it loses its freedom and possibility...it is dangerous to base work on ideology. I’ve been teaching in the field for over 20 years and I have seen many artists fall into that trap. So when I work I don’t think about feminist art, and I try to avoid any kind of assumption,” Lien said.

“I want the viewers to walk in and also be affected by the aesthetics of the work, not to simply guess at the meaning or focus just on the symbolism. Art encompasses everything.”

Although the former Dishman Art Museum director constantly works on her collections, she rarely shows them to the public, preferring to concentrate on the teaching and research aspect of her art; to date, she has put together about 10 gallery shows within the U.S. and Taiwan.

Lien said she plans to continue her development in putting together collections, and plans to put on a few shows in Taiwan and New York within the next few years. Her main focus now lies in creating collages and exploring the possibilities of three-dimensional media.

“The opportunities (in the American art world) are wonderful for me. Of course, I plan to keep working more on publishing and teaching, but I feel that it only increases my understanding of art and teaches me how to improve my own outlook and how to really observe and chronicle my environment.”

For more information about Lien’s March show, call the Art Studio at 409-838-5393 or visit [www.artstudio.org](http://www.artstudio.org).



BRESSNER from page 6

making process that I probably missed a few things in her interview. Bressner uses the old Italian technique known as millefiori, which originated in Murano about a thousand years ago. The method is based on working with long rods of glass, which are repeatedly heated and cooled. While hot, the rod is layered with color, then cooled and layered again with a new color. When sliced in cross-section, the glass has the appearance of “thousand flowers,” or, in Italian, “mille fiori.” The technique also is known as lampworking since it involves melting glass rods with a gas-fueled torch.

“The process of lampwork, torchwork or flame-work is analogous to drawing mid-air with molten glass, in three dimensions,” says Jenine on her website.<sup>2</sup>

In her gallery talk at the Center, Bressner told the audience how she got involved in this particular glass-making method. Apparently, she saw samples of Murano glass in a boutique and was instantly taken by the bright colors and intricate patterns which reminded her of the sea world. She struck up a conversation with the boutique owner and at some point exclaimed, “One day I will make glass beads like these!” The boutique owner’s reaction was dismissive and condescending, which only fueled the young artist’s desire to master the ancient Murrine technique.

Bressner encourages anyone interested in learning the secrets of Italian glass-makers to explore it firsthand. “I taught myself how to flamework with a kit I ordered in the mail more than a decade ago. Sundance Glass offers a bare bones beginning kit for \$74. I began with a kit similar to this, and Cindy Jenkins’ book, “Making Glass Beads.”<sup>3</sup>

During the talk and also in the film, Bressner was wearing an amazing necklace which she made herself with millefiori glass beads. “This is a continuous project,” she explained. “I add new beads all the time and this necklace has been growing bigger every year.”

Like other artists featured in the film, Bressner is actively involved in making wearable art. However, the installation “Inverted Harmony” belongs to of a completely different category. It is a philosophical statement, an expression of the artist’s vision of modern life and human civilization in general.

Viewers are confronted with two scenarios, which may be called the Earth models, albeit flat. Displayed in a darkened room, each one is illuminated with a separate set of lights, which gives an impression of an insular environment. In the first one, the world as we know it is upside down: the dark-green Earth — a platform suspended from the ceiling — is hovering over the sky exemplified in the grey low pedestal lying on the floor. Fluffy clouds strive to enliven the dull bareness of the sky. From above, numerous flowers cascade down as if trying to touch the clouds. These chandelier flowers provide a startling contrast to their bleak environment. Made of various fabrics, with hand-crafted glass centers, and suspended from the “Earth” platform by long threads, they burst with an endless variety of colors: red, pink, fuchsia, blue, violet, lilac and orange.

In the second model, the world has returned to its “normal” state, with the sky above and the Earth below. The rain in the form of sparking glass rods is pouring down upon the land which is blossoming



Detail from **INVERTED HARMONY: A HANDMADE ENVIRONMENT** by Jenine Bressner.  
Handmade glass and textiles.  
At Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, 2011. Image courtesy of the artist.

with flowers and plants of unimaginable colors and shapes, all made of hand-crafted glass. Some flowers look like pansies, violets, daisies, hyacinths and water-lilies; others challenge our imagination. The landscape also features green patches of grass and brown patches of soil that meander across the sand-color terrain.

Unlike the first model, in which all textiles are synthetic, this one incorporates only natural fibers and organic materials, such as natural silk and felt.

“Our impact on the natural world is currently disruptive and unbalancing in unprecedented ways,” says Jenine in her statement. “We are turning the world upside-down, but I believe in the resilience of nature — sans humans. If plants can break through pavement, nature can eventually resolve much of the damage for which we have been responsible.”

Looking at the “Inverted Harmony” installation, I thought of the irrelevance of arguing about the distinctions between art and craft, handmade and machine-made, tradition and innovation in reference to Bressner’s work. Before my eyes was a perfect example of a harmonious union between these theoretically opposite notions. The handmade flowers, with their fabric petals and glass beads, happily coexisted with lasercut textiles shaped as meandering pathways. Could the same shape be cut by hand? “The laser cutter saved me a lot of time. Besides, it would have been impossible to achieve the same level of accuracy,” says Jenine in response to a question from the audience.

And why not use modern technology? As curator of the exhibition Anna Walker notes, “The computer has evolved to become a tool for the contemporary craftsman.” Artists have never shied away from using new and advanced technology, particularly if it saved the time previously spent on tedious, mechanical labor and allowed more time for creative

exploration. Think how the camera has revolutionized the painting process in the nineteenth century. Today it’s the digital laser cutter.

In 2008, Jenine Bressner was featured in the Bazaar Bizarre Boston preview of the annual craft and art fair. In response to the question what historical figure she would like to see shopping at her table, she said, “It’d also be cool if Buckminster Fuller came over and wanted to talk about glass and structural integrity.”<sup>5</sup>

I think that the creator of the geodesic dome, whose name has become synonymous with bold innovation in modern art, would have appreciated the union of art and technology in Bressner’s “Inverted Harmony.”

“Inverted Harmony: A Handmade Environment by Jenine Bressner” is on view at the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft through March 13.

Houston Center for Contemporary Craft is a nonprofit arts organization, founded to advance education about the process, product and history of craft. Located in the Museum District at 4848 Main Street, HCCC is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and Sunday, Noon-5 p.m. Admission is free.

*Elena Ivanova is chief educator at the Stark Museum of Art in Orange.*

1 *Faythe Levine and Cortney Heimerl “Handmade Nation: The Rise of DIY, Art, Craft, and Design,” Princeton Architectural Press, 2008.*  
2 <http://www.jenine.net/lampwork.html>  
3 *Ibid.*  
4 *Hanging Gardens Create Enchanting Landscape: Inverted Harmony: A Handmade Environment by Jenine Bressner at Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, press release.*  
5 *Bazaar Bizarre Preview: Jenine Bressner Fireworks, http://bostonist.com/2008/12/04/bazaar\_bizarre\_preview\_jenine\_bressner.php*

# Around & About

If you come across any interesting exhibitions, museums or other places on your travels, share them with us. Call 409-838-5393, or contact us through our web site at [www.artstudio.org](http://www.artstudio.org). Be sure to include the location and dates of the subject, as well as any costs.

Artworks by 30 local high school seniors have been chosen to be exhibited in the **24TH ANNUAL PROTÉGÉ COMPETITION AND EXHIBITION** at the **ART MUSEUM OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS**.

Protégé will be on display at AMSET through March 27, and will then travel to selected area schools and other venues for further exposure and outreach in the Southeast Texas community.

The Protégé Competition and Exhibition is a program that offers area 12th-grade students the opportunity to begin taking the steps necessary to become part of the greater world of art. AMSET believes it is important for young artists to have an early opportunity to experience art competitions and, if accepted, learn how to properly exhibit their work.

This year, AMSET received 118 total entries. The entries were submitted from 19 schools in the Region 5 Education Service area, along with two from young artists working independently.

This year’s Protégé juror Jeff Jennings, practicing artist and art teacher, said he was delighted to see such a large group of good quality work submitted for the competition. On his selections for the 30 works to be included in the exhibition, he said, “I made choices based on whether I thought the work showed a sincere expression of idea, emotion and concept. I also took into consideration the technical skills displayed in the work.”

AMSET is located at 500 Main in downtown Beaumont.

For more information, visit [www.amset.org](http://www.amset.org).

The **MUSEUM OF THE GULF COAST** will host **EARTH SONGS**, a new exhibition featuring the latest series of clay vessels created by ceramic artist Linnis Blanton, inspired by the rhythms and melodies of Earth’s landscape, March 27-May 30.

In the artist’s words, the vessels “are formed from recycling of earth, wind fire and water. These elements are the basic materials that transform the thoughts to becoming the timeless images on the vessels surface.”

The museum is located at 700 Procter Street in Port Arthur.

For information, call 409-982-7000 or visit [www.museumofthegulfcoast.org](http://www.museumofthegulfcoast.org).

## RECENT ART STUDIO NEW OR RENEWING MEMBERS

Lana Adams  
Donna Birdwell  
Brad Bishop  
Jerre Bray  
Sharon L. Breaux  
Mike Cacioppo  
Steve Kuritz  
Martha McCanne  
Gary Pinkerton  
Charla Ricks  
Christy & Joey Valka/Richardson

The **MENIL COLLECTION** is hosting **TONY SMITH: DRAWINGS** through April 3.

“Tony Smith: Drawings” is a selection of rarely exhibited and early drawings by American artist Tony Smith (1912-1980). The work, executed within a limited time-period in the 1950s, precedes Smith’s emergence as one of the most important sculptors of the mid-twentieth-century, following his career as an architectural designer.

Although Smith came to sculpture late in his life, the exhibited drawings show that early on he was building a conceptual base of forms inspired by the modular order and the unifying morality of the Modern architecture principle that form follows function, using the paper as a serial unit with which to build upon. Along with his interest in mathematics and friendship with the Abstract Expressionists, these sources inform the formal characteristics of the drawings: staccato linear hatching, irregular interconnecting forms, and often brilliant colors. These elements and the nonobjective modular structures of a number of the drawings in this exhibition forecast his later approach to sculpture, a truly unique path, that anticipates the systematic use of serial form by a generation of minimalist artists to come.

Smith was born in South Orange, New Jersey and studied architecture at the New Bauhaus school in Chicago led by László Moholy-Nagy. After working for Frank Lloyd Wright, Smith worked as an architectural designer. In 1945 he moved to New York where he became a close friend of Barnett Newman, who introduced him to his fellow New York School painters. Among his Abstract Expressionist friends and collaborators, in the time of transition from architecture to painting and drawing and, eventually, to monumental architectonic sculpture, were Jackson Pollock and Clyfford Still. Like Still, Smith was interested in the papiers déchirees of Jean Arp. He shared an interest with Pollock in the principles of organic geometric order, harmony, and structural patterns of natural forms propounded by 19th century biomathematician, D’Arcy Thompson.

Organized by Bernice Rose, Chief Curator of The Menil Collection’s Drawing Institute and Study Center, this group of drawings provides a unique lens through which to view the Menil’s collection of Smith’s monumental outdoor sculptures that are integral to the campus and to the collecting history of the de Menil’s. John de Menil underwrote the fabrication of Smith’s first largescale sculpture The Elevens Are Up, 1963 (fabricated 1970) one of five outdoor works permanently installed on the Menil campus. In 2001, the estate gave Wall, 1964 (fabricated 2000) in honor of Dominique de Menil.

The Menil Collection is located at 1515 Sul Ross in Houston.

For more information, visit [www.menil.org](http://www.menil.org).

will host the exhibit **LANDS FIT FOR THE CAMEL: IMAGES FROM THE MEXICAN BOUNDARY SURVEYS**. This exhibit explores landscape imagery resulting from the United States War with Mexico of 1846-1848 and the resulting boundary surveys. Sketches in oil and illustrations in rare books, which documented additions to the United States territory in southwestern North America, will be on display. The exhibit will be on view through April 16.

“Warfare, art and science came together in the mid-nineteenth century. The United States and Mexico fought over territory, but these lands were not well known. To collect scientific information, the Army assigned topographical engineers and a civilian artist to collect data as military troops marched from New Mexico to California,” Sarah Boehme, Stark Museum director, said.

The exhibit features six oil sketches by artist John Mix Stanley who accompanied the United States Army of the West. Stanley’s paintings were used as illustrations for the published report by Lieut. Col. William H. Emory, Notes of a Military Reconnaissance from Fort Leavenworth, in Missouri, to San Diego, in California, which is included in the exhibit.

After the war, the boundary surveys also included the collecting of scientific information and visual imagery of the geography, minerals, plants and animals of the region. Two illustrated publications resulting from the surveys will be included in the exhibit. Boundary commissioner John Russell Bartlett published his “Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents in Texas, New Mexico, California, Sonora, and Chihuahua, Connected with the United States and Mexican Boundary Commission, During the Years 1850, ’51, ’52, and ’53.” William H. Emory served as author for the official government publication, Report on the United States and Mexican Boundary Survey.

“We invite visitors to experience this moment of history. This exhibit takes us back to a time when the United States had expansionist plans to span the continent. The government, however, did not know a great deal about the unfamiliar desert lands and needed information about what was there and how to approach it,” Boehme said.

Commissioner Bartlett, after surveying in the desert, wrote a chapter in his book recommending the importation of camels for transportation use in the American Southwest. He wrote, “There are peculiarities in the arid plains and deserts of North America which seem to fit them for the habits of the camel.” The United States Army did briefly bring camels to North America to cope with the difficulties of travel across desert lands.

The exhibit includes an education area with an interactive puzzle and children’s books. Visitors can learn about camels and their role in United States history.

The museum is located at 712 Green Avenue in Orange. Admission is free.

For more information call 409-886-ARTS (2787) or visit [www.starkmuseum.org](http://www.starkmuseum.org).

Good-day, Good Night.

The cat licks at the dripping tap before the day begins.

The sun is stuck on a broken limb of the neighbor’s dead oak tree.

A newspaper flies blind from a passing car into the dark green yard.

My wife, who sleeps in sainthood, lolls, alone, alluringly in bed.

The children, who are never still, Remarkably, now, are.

The good night bids goodnight to me, with shoulders dimly slumped.

And as he trundles from the sun I wish him foolishly “Good day.”

Jesse Doiron

These Dreams

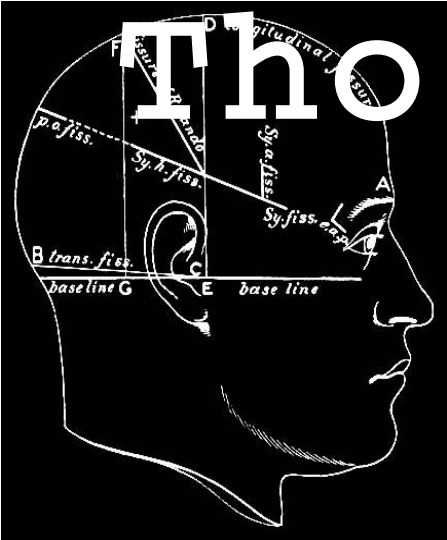
From the beginning to the end  
I always comes back to you again  
And how long will I keep these  
Dreams of loving you  
Midnight I sleep near dawn I wake  
Little difference can I make  
between the two  
Why is the question  
That I wish I knew  
Why it’s you who’s always there  
Why it’s me to always care  
Why I dream of loving you  
Like it’s the only thing for me to do  
Like singing a song just off key  
Without you it sounds all wrong to me  
Falling for you it happened so fast  
There’s just no way  
That I could make it last  
All I do to keep you it seems  
Is hold you so tight  
All night while I sleep in my dreams  
Tell me how long does it take  
To make make-believe come true  
When I can’t forget  
When I don’t want to stop  
When I can’t awake  
From these dreams of loving you

H.J. Ridley, Jr.

Haiku #52

Two girls, one made up.  
One shuttered, developing.  
Brooklyn perfect both.

Andy Coughlan



### Submission Guidelines and Disclaimer

ISSUE solicits and publishes the work of local authors. Poetry, short fiction, scholarly works and opinion pieces may be submitted for review. All works must be typed or submitted on a disk (using approved word processing software), or may be sent to TASI by e-mail. All works are subject for review by our editor, and may be rejected or edited on the basis of grammar, spelling or content.

The opinions expressed in “Thoughtcrime” do not necessarily reflect the opinions of TASI, its Board of Directors, ISSUE’s editorial staff, or donors to TASI. Send typed works to:

### ISSUE

720 Franklin, Beaumont, TX 77701  
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Authors must submit a daytime telephone number along with all submissions. Pen names are acceptable, but authors must supply real names for verification. All submitted works become property of TASI, and whether rejected or accepted, are not returned to the author. ISSUE does not notify of rejection by mail or telephone.

Stir of Night

The gardners stood slack-jawed  
at the sight of so many crates  
stacked in the hot grass  
then bent the boards

and saw the huddle of veined wings:  
dozens of bats, shipped from the east,  
were to be scattered in the southern garden  
like so many leaves on the night air.

But the gardenhands  
mistook their daylight sleep for death  
and spread the Texas soil  
to make coffins of the crates.

They heard no shrieks or beats of wings  
when shoveled earth piled  
on planks, and it took many years  
for the men to learn that burial was a mistake.

Mosquitoes still gather there  
in a thick, humming mist  
above the hollow ground

but part when dark air  
sways the thistle tops  
like a stir of brittle wings.

Jason Duncan

To My Children

To my children on this day you choose  
All of my blessings you may simply refuse.  
I am shown the greatest mortal sin  
For envy allows others to seep in.

I’ve watched you grow as one together  
While I have stepped further from the center.  
My heart bleeds for the loss of the two  
But joy replaces pain with the growth anew.

By your side I shall be  
Up ’til the moment I shall set you free.  
This new life within a touch  
Leaves opportunity to never interrupt.

On your day of happiest gain  
Fosters within my greatest pain.  
For today is the day  
I must gather thoughts to walk away.

Nick Graham

Tracie Middleton

REVIEW from page 7

whose influence runs from the early to the mid century.

While many Texas artists explored Regionalism, many Southeast Texans chose to look outside for their influences. Much of the work in “Cross-Currents” has a European feel, but it is clearly approached with an American spirit. These artists are not copying European work, but adapting it to promote their own ideas.

During the exhibition’s opening reception Jan. 21, Beaumont’s Tam Kiehnhoff and Randy Tibbitts of Houston spoke about the value of having an exhibition of this kind.

“The show features artists who may have been forgotten, but who painted when they were younger and showed in important venues with other, better-known Texas artists,” Keihnhoff said, adding that many of the artists in the exhibition were not only painters, but had a hand in establishing the museum in Beaumont.

They both recognized that with the rise of the oil industry, there was a level of prosperity here that allowed artists to travel and absorb influences. It also enabled people to collect work, which encouraged artists.

Women are well represented in “Cross-Currents.” Keihnhoff said that many of the women were not only artists, but also educators, citing Lorraine David who was in the public schools for 30 years.

“She hired serious art teachers — not just craft people — but artists who were very serious and qualified,” Keihnhoff said.

The variety on display means



MAGIC SCRIPT #1, by Maudee Carrón, is one of the almost 200 works by Southeast Texas artists on display at AMSET through April 3 in the exhibition “Southeast Texas Art: Cross-Currents and Influences, 1925-1965.”

that there is something for everyone. Will Amelia Sterns Price’s “Beansnapper,” c. 1940s, is almost Flemish in approach, while Leila McConnell’s “The First Bar of Peace” is a fine minimalist piece.

Is it fair to constantly refer the pieces in the show to the works of more “famous” artists? Yes. The mission of the show is to shine a light on artists whose work has been over-

shadowed by their more illustrious counterparts. And for what reason? Mostly it is simply because these artists chose to contribute to the art scene here instead of heading to the bright lights of the big city where they were more likely to be seen by the “right” people. But that is the nature of the beast, and AMSET is to be applauded for turning the spotlight on these artists.

Some of the artists in the show achieved some celebrity within the field. Robert Preusser, whose stunning 1946 “Tentacular Extensions” is a fine example of post-war abstraction, gained recognition as a Houston artist whose reach spread wider.

“To have a world-class collection you need world stuff. But we have world-class art here, too. Some of these artists may not be recognized beyond here, but at least we can recognize them,” Tibbitts said.

There is a saying that, “Old soldiers never die, they only fade away.” Fortunately, with artists, their work lingers. If we recognize and value these excellent, if unsung painters and sculptors, then they will never fade away.

“Southeast Texas Art: Cross-Currents and Influences, 1925-1965” is on display through April 3.

AMSET is located at 500 Main in downtown Beaumont.

For more information, visit [www.amset.org](http://www.amset.org).



FOXHOLE by Herman Hugg



Mission Statement

Founded in 1983, The Art Studio, Inc. is devoted to: providing opportunities for interaction between the public and the Southeast Texas community of artists; furnishing affordable studio space to originating artists of every medium; promoting cultural growth and diversity of all art forms in Southeast Texas; and providing art educational opportunities to everyone, of every age, regardless of income level, race, national origin, sex or religion.

PURPOSE

The purpose of The Art Studio, Inc. is to (1) provide educational opportunities between the general public and the community of artists and (2) to offer sustained support for the artist by operating a non-profit cooperative to provide studio space and exhibition space to working artists and crafts people, and to provide an area for group work sessions for those artists and crafts people to jointly offer their labor, ideas, and enthusiasm to each other.

GOALS

- 1. To present public exhibitions
- 2. To provide educational opportunities
- 3. To provide accessible equipment for artists
- 4. To provide peer feedback through association with other artists and crafts people

OBJECTIVES

- 1. To present 10 art exhibitions per year
- 2. To maintain equipment for artists in a safe working environment
- 3. To provide better access to artists for the public
- 4. To offer regularly scheduled adult and children's classes
- 5. To develop and maintain public activities with all sectors of the community
- 6. To develop and maintain equipment to aid artists in their work
- 7. To provide a display retail outlet for artists
- 8. To expand programming and activities with increased facility space

SOUTHEAST TEXAS Arts COUNCIL This project is funded in part by the Texas Commission on the Arts, Dishman Trust, Entergy, HEB, and the Vic Rogers Foundation through the Southeast Texas Arts Council

VIEW from page 3

this year. Those who were there know what a great evening it was and I would especially like to recognize the seriousness of the costumes. I mean that in the most fantastic way possible. There was critical thought and deft fabrication with a good helping of frivolity to make a great evening wonderful. Plan for next year around the same time and we'll see what challenge we'll offer next year.

There are many people to thank for putting on the event and a full accounting is on page 5 of this ISSUE.

We are actively trying to offer classes. I was successful in getting a clay class together and we still want to have a drawing group, figure, every Wednesday.

Let us know what you are interested in and maybe we can accommodate.

‘How in a world gilt with love  
May I thank you above this human cadence’

Studio to host open show inspired by poem

THE ART STUDIO, INC. is offering artists an opportunity to participate in a group show in October. Artists are invited to produce a piece inspired by the lines:

How in a world gilt with love  
May I thank you above this human cadence

This will also be the title of the show.

“For several years we have played with the idea of a group show where all the work is inspired by a common theme or idea,” tenant Andy Coughlan said. “The schedule worked such that we could finally do it, with enough lead time for people to produce the work.”

Elizabeth French, TASI assistant director, said the lines are by long-time

Studio member George Wentz, a well-known artist and poet, who died last year.

“George submitted poems to the ISSUE consistently since it was first published,” French said. “It seemed appropriate to use something he wrote.”

Artists are asked to commit to entry by June 1, with the work to be delivered to The Art Studio by Sept. 1. There is no cost to enter the show, but entrants are expected to be members of The Art Studio. Memberships begin at \$35 per year. Memberships should be purchased by June.

“We want the contributors to have plenty of time to really think about what they want to do, how the words res-

onate with them,” French said. “But we also need to plan ahead so we can work out the space. That’s why we are asking for artists to commit in June.”

In order to have a consistent theme, 2-dimensional work should not exceed 24x30 inches. Sculptures should not exceed 30 inches in any direction. Limit one piece per person.

“This is really an exciting project,” Coughlan said. “Art is such a subjective thing and I expect a really diverse body of work, one that will illustrate the wide variety of styles and interpretations that are possible.”

The lines were selected to afford the widest possible interpretations.

For more information, call 409-838-5393.



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All ages welcome • 21 and up BYOB and have your ID.



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INSIDE

- 'CROSS-CURRENTS' REVIEW
- THOUGHTCRIME: MUSINGS FROM AREA POETS
- SHATTERING THE IMAGE
- DRAWING IN MID-AIR WITH MOLTEN GLASS

ISSUE

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 life blood  
of our organization.  
WE COULDN'T DO IT  
WITHOUT YOU!  
To volunteer, drop by  
The Art Studio, Inc.,  
or call 409-838-5393.

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Andy Ledesma  
Rhonda Rodman  
Sue Wright  
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FOR ART OPENINGS ON  
THE FIRST SATURDAY  
OF THE MONTH  
  
THIS MONTH:  
LOVE OF LABOR.ART OF CRAFT  
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ART MUSEUM OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS	500 MAIN
BABE DIDRIKSON ZAHARIAS MUSEUM	1750 IH-10E
BEAUMONT CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU	801 MAIN
(IN CITY HALL)	
BEAUMONT ART LEAGUE (FAIRGROUNDS)	2675 GULF ST
THE CAFE	730 LIBERTY
NEW YORK PIZZA & PASTA	790 NECHES
SETAC	701 NORTH STREET, STE. 1
TATTOOMANIA	601 PARK
TEXAS ENERGY MUSEUM	600 MAIN

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	7060 PHELAN BLVD.

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**ORANGE**

STARK MUSEUM OF ART	712 GREEN AVE.
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