

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2008

BRANDON NEWS&TRIBUNE

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Artists displaying work at The Creative Native Gallery include, from left, Sherrie St. James-Bastien, Larry Martin, Laura "Michele" Edsall, Roxanne Tobaison, Teri Lyon, Pam Moody and Margaret Conte. Moody also is the owner of the gallery, which opened Friday.

Tribune photo by JIM REED

A Place To Hang

Local artist Pam Moody, owner of The Creative Native Gallery on Falkenburg Road, has assembled a colorful palette of artists to display and sell their works. They include sculptors, painters and photographers whose works range from understated and traditional to whimsical and unconventional.

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BRANDON.TBO.COM

Read what people think of cameras at intersections. Page 14



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Share photos from local sporting events or other fun happenings in your area.



Post your events and share them with the community.

TOP STORIES



Lend A Hand

Organizers of the Brandon Fourth of July celebration want your help.

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Boundless Playground

A Dover school raises money to build a playground for students with disabilities.

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A Rose Is A Rose

Brandon gardener Barb Castelli offers advice for growing roses.

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Natural High

Nature's Classroom commemorates Earth Day and an anniversary.

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Tribune photos by JIM REED

"Scratch" is a ceramic sculpture by artist Pam Moody, owner of The Creative Native Gallery, which opened Friday.

Made In Florida

A new gallery features works by artists from the Sunshine State.

By LAURA FRAZIER
The Tampa Tribune

TAMPA — One creates collages that bristle with images straight out of a dreamscape.

Another commits to film fascinating freeze-frame details of otherwise ordinary objects.

And one dons a welder's mask and gloves to coax cold sheets of steel into hot works of art.

Their materials and methods might run the full visual arts gamut, but eight artists with works on exhibit at a new gallery say they share a common muse.

"We are all proud to be Florida natives," said Pam Moody, owner of The Creative Native Gallery on Falkenburg Road, north of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard west of Brandon.

Moody, a Sarasota native who lives in Citrus Park, said she saw a diamond in the rough in 2006 when she spied the 1,700-square-foot circa-1940 bungalow for sale.

"I saw potential, I saw good bones, and I saw a lot of work, too," Moody said.

A multidisciplined artist noted

THE CREATIVE NATIVE GALLERY

WHAT: Art gallery featuring eclectic body of work by local artists who are Florida natives

WHERE: 5307 N. Falkenburg Road, Tampa

HOURS: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays; after hours and weekends by appointment

INFORMATION: (813) 841-3038

for her ceramic sculptures, Moody said she chased a lot of spiders out of corners while transforming the wood-frame structure from an uninhabited residence into what she hopes will be a lively showplace for local artists.

"It was a sad, neglected little property," she said.

The gallery opened Friday after a year of renovations.

Moody assembled a colorful palette of artists to display and sell their works. Several work with more than one medium — the group boasts sculptors, painters



This piece is also by Moody. Works by various artists are displayed in every room of the old house that she converted into a gallery.



This blue dichroic glass necklace was created by Sherrie St. James-Bastien of Plant City. She calls herself a "welding sculptress."

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A Plant City native who lives in Siesta Key, Kitchens uses wood, rope and acrylic paint to create decorative signs reminiscent of Key West beach bars. The Florida folk-style signs are ablaze with tropical colors and tongue-in-cheek sayings such as "Only dead fish go with the current," "Gone crazy, be back soon," and "When life hands you lem-

ons, grab the tequila and salt." Laura Edsall, who goes by the name Michele, admits her paintings of nuns behaving badly are a little twisted. But she said it is all in good fun and relatively good taste.

Nuns in full habit sip wine, dance, gossip and whisper provocatively to one another in Edsall's "Nunpuns" series of acrylic paintings.

She said the strict religious-school days of her youth, followed by afternoons spent watching horror films, may have contributed to her take on religion and humor.

She pointed to a painting in which nuns mingle and sip red wine, seemingly oblivious to a malevolent little devil peeking out from behind their backs. One nun whispers into the ear of another who appears to be blushing.

"Maybe she's telling a dirty joke," Edsall said.

Sherrie St. James-Bastien, also born in Plant City, is an accomplished underwater photographer whose work has graced The Florida Aquarium and other public venues throughout Hillsborough and Pinellas counties. About a year

ago, she needed a new artistic challenge, so she bought a torch and took a few classes in metal sculpture. She calls herself a "welding sculptress."

Some of the creatures St. James-Bastien has photographed underwater have followed her to shore. She blasts and bends plate steel into wall sculptures of her favorite subject, sea turtles. She wielded her gas-powered metal arc welder outside the gallery last week to make a romantic sculpture of a mermaid.

Brandon native Margaret Conte's works also lean to-

ward the lyrical. She uses a variety of media to create three-dimensional wood sculptures and collages with ethereal details that tell a story.

The gallery also features the works of Roxanne Tobaison, well known in the Brandon area for her true-to-life watercolor paintings of Florida scenery, wildlife and local historical landmarks.

The Seffner resident said the local fine arts scene is abuzz about the opening of the

See ART GALLERY, Page 20 ►



During the reception, we invited everyone to sign Papa's favorite chair. Whenever we went up to the lake house he'd sit for hours waiting for the sun to set. Now it's covered in last good-byes. He'd think that was pretty great.

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ART GALLERY

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Moody's gallery and renewed community support for the Brandon League of Fine Arts, The Greater Brandon Arts Council, Center Place Fine Arts and Civic Association and the new Beaux Arts Gallery in the Winthrop development in Riverview.

Conte shares Tobaison's optimism.

"There are so many artists and very few gallery opportunities," Conte said. "In the future, I hope there will be more art recognition and opportunities for artists to show their work."

Two artists with works on display at Moody's gallery are new to the arts scene.

Teri Lyon found a lull in her busy life in 2006 and took up oil painting. The Miami native's works explode with vibrant colors and bold lines.

Larry Martin recently retired from his job at a local printing company. The Tampa native said he has dabbled in photography for more than 35 years, but his exhibit at The Creative Native is his first foray into public display.

He travels near and far in search of natural and architectural subjects with interesting

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MARGARET CONTE
Artist

forms or details. He has photographed juicy produce at the Ybor City Fresh Market, nostalgic dashboard gizmos at a car show in Plant City and tangles of mangroves at E.G. Simmons Park in Ruskin.

While his fellow artists hold down the fort at the gallery, Martin will be on a treasure-hunt of sorts this week in the Carolinas, where he will look for slices of rural life and interesting old barns to photograph.

"I'd like to find some great old structures, and maybe use some of the wood from actual barns to make frames for the photos," he said.

Moody said she wants to provide opportunities for local artists to display and grow.

"It is important to me to raise awareness of the exceptional local artists who live and work right here in our community," she said.

Reporter Laura Frazier can be reached at (813) 657-4523 or lfrazier@tampatrib.com.



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