



RealArt DeRidder

Arts Cooperative

108 West First St.
DeRidder, LA 70634
realartderidder.org

Press Release: "Coming Home" Group Exhibition

Bill Iles, Joelle Smith Ford, David Clanton and Donna Gibson Pickens

December 15 , 2009 to January 9, 2010

Public Reception: Tuesday: December 29, 2009, 6-8pm - honoring the artists and featuring live music from "Beauregard's Courtesy"

Four artists from DeRidder will be 'coming home' to share their passion for the visual arts. Joelle Smith Ford, Bill Iles, Donna Gibson Pickens and David Clanton all graduated from DeRidder High School in the 1960s and all went on to pursue their passion for art.

Bill Iles is well-known in southwest Louisiana and beyond. He is retired from McNeese State University as the head of the Art Department and currently maintains a studio in Lake Charles.

Joelle Smith Ford exhibits her sculpture nationally and is based in Lawrence, Kansas.

Donna Gibson Pickens is affiliated with the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts in Montgomery, Alabama.

David Clanton is an independent photographer based in Dallas, Texas.

The work of this group will be on display at RealArt DeRidder Arts Cooperative throughout the holiday season. A reception honoring the artists will held between Christmas and New Years Day, on Tuesday, December 29th, 6-8pm.

Music for the reception will be provided by the DeRidder based band: 'Beauregard's Courtesy.'" More information can be found at <http://realartderidder.org> or from David Labby at (337) 202-1089

Artist statements and other information are included with this press release.
High res images are also attached.

Thanks!



David Labby
Gallery Coordinator
RealArt DeRidder Arts Cooperative
108 West First Street
DeRidder, Louisiana 70634

dlabby@gmail.com

(337) 202-1089

...artist statements, further information

“Coming Home” Group Exhibition: December 15, 2009 – January 9, 2010

Bill Iles Bill Iles is represented in the exhibition by three landscape paintings reflective of the Dry Creek area, where his family still retain an old family homestead which has been in his family for five generations.

After retiring from McNeese State University, where he served as Visual Arts Department Head, Iles maintains an active studio in Lake Charles, LA. His works have been included in over 200 regional and national exhibitions and his works are contained in numerous private and public collections throughout the United States.

Joelle Smith Ford Mixed media, assemblage and collage are particularly interesting to me since many facets of art and materials are represented. Even though my work is very different in manner of application and the corresponding finished results, one thread of continuity exists - the utilization of materials found, usually items that were no longer thought to have value. Implementing mundane objects beyond their traditional use is challenging, personally rewarding, beneficial to the environment and sometimes humorous.

A found object, intriguing in itself, when combined with many of the same should create greater interest. It sometimes takes many years to collect enough material for a project, and as the “cache” increases in size, time is allowed to determine an idea for that particular object. Collecting is an on-going process, and frequently one project leads to the idea for another. Art history plays an important role in my work.

David Clanton We are in an extraordinary period in the acceptance of the photographic image into the world of fine art. Photography has long vied for full acceptance in galleries and the

visual academy, but now more than ever, the works of fine-art photographers using digital media are appearing in art galleries and being published in books.

Working with digital image photography, I strive to push the boundaries of artistic subject matter, finding interest in those subjects that are usually overlooked as valid objects of artistic study. I present the essence of what I photograph—textures, plays of shadows and light, bold splashes of color—transforming them through artful manipulation to produce fresh visual experiences.

The visual vocabulary should be expanded using whatever tools are available. Using the photographic approach and technical tools associated with digital image making, I use the visual power of the photographic image to trigger the imagination and stimulate the visual delight of the viewer.

The pieces in this show include subject matter that spans elemental objects to multi-image digital collage. It explores the uncharted territory between photography and fine art. Inspiration comes from the ability to blend textures, forms, and lines into new unknown images of elemental color and surprising levels of perception.

Donna Gibson Pickens Although originally a painter, Donna Pickens has been creating sculptures, installations, and large-scale public and private art commissions since 1986. Her work has been shown in regional and national juried exhibitions. Internationally she has also exhibited in Argentina, Mexico, Germany, and England. Her 40 ft. x 5 ft. ceramic and mosaic mural at the Southwest Art Center was featured in Sculpture Magazine. She has also designed meditative spaces as private commissions for gardens, medical centers, churches, and outdoor environments in Atlanta, Georgia and Santa Fe, New Mexico. Donna was born in California, raised mostly in Texas, and lived in Atlanta for 33 years. She attended DeRidder High School from the 9th – 12th grades. She received her B.A. degree from the University of Texas, her M.A. degree from Stanford University, and her M.F.A. degree from Georgia State University. She taught art to both children and adults for 27 years in a variety of public and private settings in Georgia. In 2004 she moved to Montgomery, Alabama, where she currently works as Assistant Curator of Education for the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts.

--- end