

National art exhibition on display at Langford Architecture Center

By Shane Hall
Reporter

A variety of artwork, including painting, sculpture and photography, can be seen in the gallery of the Ernest Langford Architecture Center through Saturday.

"Visual Articulations '88" is a national art exhibit featuring artists from around the country. This is the second year "Visual Articulations" has been displayed on the Texas A&M campus, the gallery director said.

Dawn Rasmussen said the idea for this exhibit on campus grew out of a past exhibit in the gallery that featured two-dimensional works by Texas artists. She said she wanted to expand that and exhibit works by national artists as well.

"Plus, with the Texas exhibit, you could only have two-dimensional works," Rasmussen explains. "You couldn't have any collage or sculpture."

"Visual Articulations '88" features works by artists from California, Oregon, Florida and various regions in Texas, including College Station.

The art of College Station is represented by Karen Hillier, a professor in the department of environmental design. Hillier's work is a cibachrome photograph titled "Seawall." Cibachrome is a color-printing process that emphasizes "intense color saturation," Hillier said.

"It (cibachrome) is made from a positive image, a transparency or a slide, so there's no inner negative," Hillier explained. "Your original is your slide and it is printed directly onto the cibachrome paper."

Hillier said "Seawall" is from a body of work she has been working on for three years. All of the works are in color, with most of them being cibachrome prints, she said.

"All of the images have to do with spaces of transition, passageways, spaces of change," Hillier said. "And that work ('Seawall') is just an example of one particular image from that body of work."

Hillier said her interest in cibachrome photography grew out of what she calls "a natural interest in color."



Photo by Jay Janner

Chop-Chop, by Alexia Markarian, is part of the Visual Articulations '88 exhibition in the Lang-

ford Architecture Center. The exhibition will continue through Saturday.

"I was trained in painting and have taught design here in the college of architecture, which included color theory," she said. "It's just natural that I would gravitate toward a color process that would allow intense color saturation."

"Visual Articulations '88" is a juried exhibit, which means the works are evaluated by a single judge called a "juror." Rasmussen said more than 500 works were sent in for consideration for exhibition. The juror for

the exhibit was Mary Evelyn Sorrell, who is the executive director of the Lawndale Art and Performance Center in Houston.

In a written statement explaining how she chose the works to exhibit, Sorrell said she was influenced by the gallery the works would be exhibited in.

"Knowing that this gallery is in the College of Architecture was extremely influential," the statement read. "I have been swayed by this

knowledge to show certain works which display an interesting sensibility to physical space and seem very conscious of form."

Sorrell also said she was interested in works that indicate social concern.

"I found several good examples of work which offer bitingly humorous looks at our society," Sorrell's statement read.

Rasmussen said the "Visual Articulations" exhibit probably will be on display in the gallery every year.

City attracts industry to help its recovery

CONROE (AP) — City leaders trying to recover from the devastation brought on by the ailing oil industry have helped attract a creamery and two major manufacturers to town, but they are still looking for more.

The buzz word is economic development in this town 40 miles north of Houston as local officials struggle to overcome the oil patch problems.

Those efforts have helped create 1,152 new jobs since 1986 and have taught the community the perils of relying on only one industry.

Conroe was left reeling when Skytop Brewster and two other major manufacturers closed. Almost overnight, more than 1,500 jobs disappeared.

In addition, there were many Conroe residents who lost their Houston jobs and moved.

"We quickly saw what could happen because of our dependence on oil," Ken Rice of the Conroe Chamber of Commerce said.

Because of Houston's once skyrocketing energy industry, Conroe's population climbed in the early 1980s. City leaders followed through by spending about \$35 million raised through grants and revenue bonds along with a \$7 million 1984 bond issue to improve services.

Houstonians create videos to share family memories

HOUSTON (AP) — Sally Slaton Webb and Dan Blust know how to turn yesterday into tomorrow. It's done with several thousand dollars worth of equipment and someone's grandparents, maybe yours.

Webb is a grandmother herself, although she likes to say she married rather young. Blust is a family man, age 29. Combining her professional experience interviewing on camera and his knowledge of photography and editing, they created Envision It, a business that captures family nostalgia on videotape.

The team goes beyond covering weddings and parties, although such events are included. What really excites Webb and Blust is a grandparent recalling stories of early days. Webb asks questions to nudge memories while Blust does the camera work. Later he edits in family photos, even snippets of old home movies, and finally wraps the biography in tender music, a touch that often brings out the hankies.

In a finished videotape, there's Grandpa staring out from his baby finery; now he is on one knee, posing with the baseball team. Then comes the wedding photo, the parenthood scenes and the first grandchild, in color and motion. Finally we see him giving Grandma's shoul-

der a squeeze at his sentimental retirement party.

It's the photograph album of the future: You don't just look, you watch, hear it and feel it.

The business was Webb's idea.

At the time, Webb's job was conducting a daily talk show, Midday, at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. Blust, a colleague, was intrigued by her idea and offered his technical advice. He's still with UTHSCH, where he has worked on such shows as the Dr. "Red" Duke health reports and the "Charles Ericsson, MD, Health Tips" in Modern Maturity programs for PBS.

So Webb outlined her plan: The work could be done with a home video camera, no?

No, said Blust. They would need a three-chip Sony professional camera, S-VHS editing equipment and Lowell light kit. And while she was out shopping, she might as well pick up a proper setting — something that looks like a grandparent's own living room.

Webb found an Irish pine dresser, a Pennsylvania wood mantel dated 1880, a Pembroke table, an armoire, an antique screen and a couple of vintage chairs. All that, centered by a

comfortable wing chair and side tables, creates a cozy settle-down corner that encourages relaxation and memories.

Apparently, the camera is soon forgotten and the subjects are all too pleased to talk about themselves. "Dan and I have an advantage," said Webb. "We are outside the families — there's no risk that we've heard these stories before." Sometimes the elderly client spins a yarn or sings an obscure little ditty that even the family has never heard.

A 91-year-old man described his first airplane ride: the take-off from a bumpy field and the unexpected and unappreciated loop-the-loop acrobatics that his pilot felt compelled to execute.

Is all this expensive? Length and mix determine the cost. At the lowest range are the video collages, with 48 family photos tapes in sequence and set to music for \$150. A video history is \$400 an hour, with \$10 for each added photo. Other combinations, including coverage of events, can be arranged.

Once the videotape is done, it can be copied repeatedly for only \$20 each, so that all the aunts, uncles and cousins can claim their own share of 1988 family nostalgia.

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