

Hall of Frames

Local galleries give artists an opportunity to show their work



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JP BEATO

Clockwise from top left: Dale Wicks, a local artist, stands in front of one of his paintings; many local artists' works are on display at the Soul Works gallery; Marie Kelly, owner of Soul Works, sits in her gallery; various works fill the main room of the Local Color gallery; Wicks' work, "The Offering," is currently on display at Soul Works.

BY HEATHER BRONDY
The Battalion

College Station may not be known as the high-art mecca of the state, but it is definitely not suffering for lack of talent.

Any creativity cats can medicate their right-brained needs with a trip to the art galleries of the College Station area, where art is not only a hobby, but is a unifying source in the community.

Marie Kelly, owner of the community's newest art galleries, Soul Works, said art is the world's stimulant for the reception and celebration of diversity.

"Our goal here is to show that art is not right or wrong," Kelly said. "It's as broad as there are people. Every culture has its artists, and what we want to show is the diversity of our own community."

Kelly has always been fascinated with art of all kinds and is a painter herself.

With local artist Dale Wicks, the two have worked to create a gallery that is a refuge for viewing as well as a place of interaction.

Kelly and Wicks said they believe everyone has artistic ability and putting too much faith into the conformed views of good and bad art is limiting.

"A lot of people don't think they have art in them," Wicks said. "But I would like to see people start exploring their creativity."

"Valuable art is being able to transparently convey what is within you. Technique is a nice vehicle, but it's really about sending a message without fear of what others are going to think."

Kelly and Wicks' plans include community painted murals, outdoor exhibitions, art classes and displaying and selling the work of local talents.

"I'd really like to get some work from the A&M international students as well as some more photography," Kelly said. "Though really, if I think we can sell it, then it's welcome to go on display."

Wicks, whose paintings are for sale in other Bryan-College Station galleries, has been working as a serious artist for the past 10 years.

"It's really been a lot of fun," Wicks said. "This is a great opportunity for locals to show their work. If you look around, you'll see we have people of all ages, genders and na-

tionalities selling their stuff here."

Soul Works offers a various collection of local, national and international art including photography, pottery, woodwork and other eclectic artistic mediums.

Afficionados of local art may enjoy the random photographs of local mailboxes or the feather raku done by Dr. Scott Linthicum, professor of veterinary medicine.

Kelly said art is not a purely visual experience.

"It's about sounds and thoughts and strong emotions," Kelly said.

The Local Color Gallery & Store is another College Station art store specializing in Texas artists. Opened by the Arts Council of Brazos Valley, the store's primary objective is to promote local and state-wide talent in the visual arts.

Executive director of the arts council David Romei said he is proud of what the gallery has done for Texas artists.

"The Local Color Gallery is the Arts Council's avenue for exhibiting and selling works by artists from all over Texas," Romei said.

"As the Brazos Valley continues to grow, it is the goal of the Arts Council to ensure that the arts are well represented and that our quality of life continues to be aesthetically challenging, pleasing and worthy of our American heritage," he said.

Because of plans for renovation, the gallery is currently holding a sale so remodeling plans can begin as soon as possible.

Jeffery Davis, gallery director, said the Arts Council is hoping to remodel the store in the more contemporary style of popular metropolex galleries such as those located in Houston and Austin.

"We want to create an environment similar to those found in galleries in larger cities," Davis said. "But we don't want to replicate them, simply use them as a model."

Both the Local Color Gallery & Store and Soul Works are interested in displaying the work of new and aspiring artists, but the owners said they hope to attract individuals who do not feel they are artistically gifted.

Bea Uvacek, Local Color customer, said she is no Picasso.

"I'm not an artist myself," Uvacek said. "But I truly appreciate and admire other people's work. That's why I'm here, just to enjoy the creativity of others."

Graveyard Shift

Late-shift workers juggle odd hours, classwork to achieve goals

BY SCOTT HARRIS
The Battalion

Maybe it is a late-night party or a late-night study session, or maybe there is a "Crocodile Hunter" marathon on television. Whatever the reason, late nights are a reality for almost every college student — but no one purposefully puts themselves through the rigors of the morning after on a regular basis. Well, almost no one. There is a group of students who do this just about every night. They are the workers of the late shift.

Working the graveyard shift cuts into study time, social time and most importantly sleep, but these workers have found a way to cope with working late nights and dealing with life at the same time.

Deepak Devaraj, a senior marketing major and bartender at The Dry Bean Saloon, said his late-night job does affect his classes.

"It definitely makes it harder to go to classes," Devaraj said. "I can usually stay awake for the first part, but then I fall asleep. I don't think it hurts my grades though. I study harder when I have to, because I know I don't have much time."

Devaraj said that while many people might use caffeine to help them stay awake, he avoids the stimulant.

"I get about five hours of sleep a night, and you never really get adjusted to sleeping that much," Devaraj said. "I just deal with it and go. I think it is a good discipline builder."

Theresa Morgart, a bartender at The Dixie Chicken and senior agriculture development major, said she and her fellow employees help each other out when it comes to school.

"We usually swap shifts with each other if we have a test," Morgart said. "The managers are really understanding. We give them our school schedules, and they work around them. They do work with you. I have been able to take time off right before finals."

Morgart said she learned quickly how to deal with late nights and classes.

"I've been working here for three years, and I learned really fast not to get eight o'clock classes," Morgart said. "By my second semester working here I knew what and what not to do."

Kevin Cambridge, an employee at the Student Computing Center and a sophomore mechanical engineering major, said he has become accustomed to his late nights.

"I work from eleven to four in the morning five nights a week," Cambridge said. "I'm used to staying up late. Last summer I worked the graveyard shift, so I've adjusted to going to bed after four. I just sleep all day on the weekend."

Cambridge said he learned to schedule all of his classes in the evening. He said he had one class in the morning that actually helped him stay awake the rest of the day.

"I had a fitness and conditioning class in the morning," Cambridge said. "It made me feel not as lethargic and got the adrenaline

flowing through my body. It woke me up."

Cambridge said the key to surviving a late night job is staying positive.

"It really is a mental thing," Cambridge said. "You gotta look on the positive side, if you let it get to you, it will. I see it as something I have to do."

Late-shift workers often say they believe their jobs pose health risks because of altered sleep schedules, but many feel the benefits outweigh the disadvantages.

Morgart said that although her lifestyle is unhealthy, she thinks the job is worth it.

"I work in a smoky environment," she said. "That coupled with the lack of sleep and not being able to eat right makes it unhealthy. The employees tend to get sick a lot, but working here is worth it."

Working the graveyard shift can lead to many embarrassing moments for the student worker — sleeping through class, missing tests or answering the home phone as if it were the work phone.

Morgart said that although nothing too embarrassing has happened to her, she has friends that have suffered some humiliation.

"The worst thing I've done is been sound asleep at home, and when the phone rang I answered like I was at the [Dixie] Chicken," Morgart said. "But I did have a friend that worked here and he slept for three hours [in] class. His class was over at 10:50 [a.m.], and he didn't wake up until one in the afternoon."



GABBY RUENES/THE BATTALION