

Holiday Penguin Pantry

Students prepare holiday meals for students and their families—a total of 450 people. The meals will be distributed by the Penguin Pantry.

Archer @ Archer



As retired Clark College art professor James Archer stood in the gallery named after him and gazed at the works hanging on the walls, his expression was slightly wistful. Archer was attending the reception for “Archer @ Archer,” an exhibit of selections from Archer’s private art collection, which he is donating to the college where he taught for 23 years.

“It’s pretty overwhelming,” he said, standing between two colorful abstract prints of his own and a row of prints made by a former student who is now an art professor himself. “Many of these works were done by young people whom I mentored over the years. Most of them, I never was able to frame, so this is my first time seeing them framed and hung as a collection. It’s a very emotional experience for me.”



Carson Legree, left, with Jim Archer at the opening on January 12.

The college has received many donations of art through the Clark College Foundation over the years, but this donation is

unusual both because of its size and its historical significance. Archer is donating 129 works total, about 40 of which are on display at the gallery. These works include drawings, paintings, prints, and collage, many of them by Clark instructors or students. Not only do they form an impressive collection of regional art, but they also represent the artistic vision of Archer Gallery's founding director.

Archer originally became curator of the gallery in 1982, when it was still located within the Clark College Bookstore and was called the Index Gallery. Successful in attracting well-known Northwest artists, the Index Gallery became known as one of the region's top alternative venues for contemporary artists. In 1995, the gallery—which by then had been relocated to a larger space within Gaiser—was renamed in Archer's honor. It moved to its current location in the lower level of the Penguin Union Building in 2005.

"This donation is significant because it has a lot of regional pieces, many with a strong Clark connection," said Clark art professor and current Archer Gallery curator Senseney Stokes. "There are works here from [retired art professor and former Archer Gallery curator] Carson Legree, from Jim himself, from [retired art professor] Jim Baker. But even beyond these connections, some of the work here is so strong, so beautiful. Jim collected some really great stuff, and we're lucky to have it in our campus collection."



Professors bring art students to the Archer Gallery regularly as part of their instruction.

Clark's Art Committee will be deciding where to place pieces from the collection after the show ends February 20. Members of the college community are invited to provide the committee

with feedback on placement of particular objects.

Asked why he chose to donate his collection to Clark, Archer explained that he was downsizing to a smaller home and that Clark seemed the natural place to donate these works. "I'm an alumnus of this college, I worked here," he said. "I'm happy that they won't just be put in a closet here. People will see them, and react to them, for a long time to come."

Photos of the exhibit can be viewed on our Flickr site.

Photos Clark College/Jenny Shadley

Art that Speaks Volumes



"Abu Ghraib" sculpture by Rex Silvernail

Clark College's Art Selection Committee recently honored the legacies of two local artists by placing their work in Cannell Library.

In fall 2012, friends of the late Rex Silvernail approached Clark College about receiving one or more of his artworks. Silvernail, an accomplished sculptor, had been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease and wanted to ensure that his art would be kept available to the public after his death. Clark is among many institutions that stepped forward to house his work; others include the Portland Art Museum, Hallie Ford Museum, Maryhill Museum, Fort Vancouver Historic Reserve, and the Fort Vancouver Regional Library.

Silvernail was born in Tacoma, Wash. He earned his MFA from Northern Illinois University and later received a Fulbright

Scholarship to attend the Kitanmax School of Northwest Coast Indian Art—the first non-Native person to do so—where he learned traditional methods for manipulating wood. He became known for an artistic style that blended contemporary Western techniques with ancient traditions of craftsmanship, creating works that emphasized his interest in environmentalism and world peace.



“Shilo” wood and
paper sculpture
by Rex Silvernail

Silvernail died in April 2013. By then the Art Selection Committee had already begun the process of accepting and placing two of his works: *Shilo* and *Abu Ghraib*. The former is a joyous piece made in honor of Silvernail’s granddaughter; the latter has been called “one of his strongest anti-war statements.” Together, they provide a cogent summary of Silvernail’s breadth of subject matter as an artist.

“We chose to place the pieces where they would have maximum visual impact and viewing accessibility,” said Art Selection Committee member and art professor Lisa Conway. “We wanted a space that would enhance the dimensional qualities of these unique pieces, and allow for them to be really set apart from, yet showcased within, their surroundings. After months of considering various sites across our campuses, the committee chose the library location. Cannell Library continues to be a great place to view art on campus.”

The third piece placed in Cannell is a large bronze casting plaque known as “The Lincoln Medallion.” It depicts a young Abraham Lincoln sitting beneath a tree, reading a book, with the inscription “I will study to prepare myself and maybe someday my chance will come.” It was made by George B. Clausen, the father of recently retired business technology

professor John Clausen. The younger Clausen, together with his sister, Grace Sorensen, donated the piece to the college in memory of their parents.



Bronze casting plaque of Abraham Lincoln by George B. Clausen, donated by retired business technology professor John Clausen and his sister, Grace Sorensen

George Clausen was, like Lincoln, a self-taught man. He quit high school in order to support his family when his own father became ill, teaching himself the trade of architectural drafting. He also taught himself bronze casting; his works were housed in, among other places, the Oregon State Capitol and the Vista House. In 1937, when he created the mold for the Lincoln Medallion, he was working at the Portland Art Museum.

John Clausen and his sister wanted their father's medallion to be placed at Clark College—and specifically in Cannell—because of its theme of education and reading.

These three pieces are just the most recent to be sited by the Art Selection Committee, which is responsible for selecting art through the Washington State Arts Commission Art in Public Places Program. This program facilitates the acquisition, placement, and stewardship of artwork in state-funded building projects. One-half of one percent for art funds is generated by new construction projects in state agencies, community colleges, universities, and public schools. Local committees representing project sites make all final artwork selection decisions.

In addition, the Art Selection Committee is responsible for acceptance and location of donated art objects, markers and

monuments (other than instruction/gallery items) and the purchase and location of art objects acquired through means other than the Art in Public Places Program. The committee monitors and makes decisions regarding the maintenance and care of all college art objects.

Currently, the college's art collection includes almost 300 artworks in media as varied as metal sculpture, painting, line drawing, and textiles.