

Going to the Dogs in a Lighthearted Show

Written by Michael LoGuidice
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Is Quad City Arts going to the dogs? Apparently so, at least from August 20 to September 24. Quad City Arts sent out a call for entries for dog-themed art, and the jury decided on 70 works by 48 regional artists now on display. It's a strong show with both humor and richness, particularly if you like dogs. (A note to you cat lovers: Quad City Arts plans an all-cat show next year.)

There are almost no male artists in this show. Until now, I never believed my roommate in college, who told me that the way to attract women was to get a dog and walk it in a park frequented by women.

One of my favorite works is the gallery installation of a fire hydrant walking its invisible dog. It sets the tone for a lighthearted show with works that can be taken seriously. For example, *Lady White Cloud/Great Pyrenees* by Andi Naab is a pastel done in a romantic realistic style. Naab depicts what looks to my eye to be an Irish setter with a white coat. The use of white with a blue background gives the dog a regal look and calls to mind snow-capped mountain peaks. The dog takes on a larger-than-life quality, which is why I consider it a romantic-style pastel.

The whimsy shown in *Margaux's Memory Shrine* by Linda Brown-Link shows us a dog that ran the household. It is a kitschy cabinet filled with relics and decorated with the furniture equal of rhinestones. It is a cross between a trophy and a monument to a dog. A ceramic Margaux is on the top shelf, and I'm sure that in life, if there was a Margaux, she always demanded to inhabit the top shelf.

Late Afternoon by Mariam Graff is a Norman Rockwell style of quiet painting, featuring a semi-nude, seated older gentleman being looked in upon by a full-sized French poodle. The use of warm colors and lots of light and shadows adds to the relaxed atmosphere. The painting is static, which gives it the nostalgic aura much like Rockwell's *Saturday Evening Post* illustrations.

Jessie Black's painting *Hot Dog* pretty well sums up the sense of humor Quad City Arts is going for in this show. Where else could a hot dog be entered in a dog show?

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I emphatically recommend visiting this exhibit. The prices for the works are extremely reasonable, from a low of \$30 with only a few priced over \$500. If you like dogs, this show might yield you some bargains.