

Three Shows Provide Plenty of Holiday-Shopping Fodder

Written by Michael LoGuidice

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In taking a tour of three art shows this weekend, the pick of the litter is Sheri Seggerman's and Elizabeth Shriver's show at MidCoast Gallery West in downtown Rock Island. The Quad City Arts Center is presenting *The Artist in You*, an exhibition juried by Nick DiGioria, Kunhild Blacklock, and Gloria Burlingame. At the Quad City International Airport gallery near the security checkpoint, Quad City Arts presents digital and glass artwork.

Seggerman has elevated to very elegant and refined floral prints what some woman started when she sat on a Xerox machine and sent her copied self to a co-worker. According to Seggerman, an illumigraph results when her floral subjects are scanned by a high-resolution imaging machine. She states: "An illumigraph is a light etching, an optical image produced without the aid of a camera's lens. Beginning as a personal horticultural record of my own seasonal anticipations, my series of plants and fruits began to multiply as I found a need to record the transient magic in the gardens, woods, and prairie surrounding my home. Each year I miss the critical moment of some species as I'm busy cultivating the next or composting the last, so the series slowly grows and as the seasons change so do my skills in recording."

The depth and texture of her floral and vegetative prints are unique and arranged in pleasing compositions. I was very impressed with how textures are reproduced and how there is an illusion of depth realistically created without having a vanishing point.

Shriver has recreated a coral reef within the gallery space with her ceramic creations inspired by undersea life. They have muted colors but the shapes are remarkably realistic. Shriver states: "I work with clay to create an array of graceful, organic forms. These pieces are made through a variety of hand-building methods such as slab-building, coiling, pinching, and forming with molds. Rarely relying on glaze, I use textures, stains, and colored clay to add visual and tactile interest. I am drawn toward neutral earth tones, and my work reflects the natural landscape, plant, and undersea life that are my inspiration." Seggerman's and Shriver's exhibit runs through December at MidCoast Gallery West.

The Artist in You is an exhibition for emerging and established artists living within a 250-mile radius of the Quad Cities. The show is at the Quad City Arts Center in downtown Rock Island

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and continues through December 23. Forty-four artists were chosen to be part of this group exhibit, and all 56 artists who entered the competition were provided critiques of their submissions by the jurors: Nick DiGioia, adjunct professor of art at St. Ambrose University; Kunhild Blacklock, an artist living in Rapids City whose degree is from St. Ambrose University; and Gloria Burlingame, an artist living in the Broadway Historic District of Rock Island who is an instructor with Augustana College's Kaleidoscope program.

Best in show was *Rojo Dream* by Dana Coppens, with the best three-dimensional art being Bill Wholford's *Grandpa's Violin*. Although *Iris* didn't win any awards, its size and composition drew my attention and dominates the space where it is hung – unfortunately, around a corner from the main gallery.

The glass and digital exhibit at the airport (running through the end of the year) has some interesting digital images and some very good glass works. The digital images are a bit too invested in the things that Photoshop can do as opposed to being about composition. The glass works are better examples of strong design. John Miller's *Ribcage Vessel*, for example, is a good mix of shape and color, while Bill Carlson's *Contrapuntal* is a great geometric composition, and one of my personal favorites of the exhibit.

With the holiday shopping season upon us, these shows offer artwork ranging from \$85 to \$4,500. The glass artworks are the pieces with the highest prices, while Elizabeth Shriver's ceramics at MidCoast Gallery West are the most reasonably priced, and a bargain based on the quality of the work.