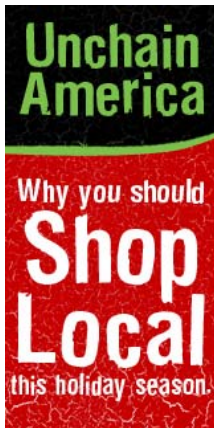


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Oklahoma Heritage Museum shares statewide talent

While its most recognizable piece of art may be the bronze pioneer woman statue, Ponca City is home to a diverse artistic community that is as contemporary as it is traditional.



"The Artists of Ponca City," currently showing at in the Tulsa World Gallery of the [Gaylord-Pickens Oklahoma Heritage Museum](#), includes juried works from artists who live in and around the town. Running through Sept. 24, the exhibit is part of the museum's "Art on shARTel" series, which focuses on state artists.

"I wasn't really familiar with Ponca City artists, so it was a chance to see what was going on in other parts of the state," said Nathan Lee, founder of Inclusion Art and show co-juror. "It's cool for Oklahoma City and Tulsa to be the flagships for art, but other cities are doing great things. Oklahoma City has started this huge surge of growth, so why leave these other ones out, especially when they're growing with us?"

DOZEN ARTISTS

More than a dozen artists were selected for the the exhibition, which includes works that are mostly two-dimensional pieces and cover mixed media, photography and paintings that range from realistic landscapes to colorful abstractions.

"Ponca City artists really pay attention to the craft of the art," Lee said. "They take their craft seriously."

The jurors selected Audrey Schmitz's "See No Evil" as the "Best of Show," a mixed-media sculpture created with silver gelatin, photography, wood and glass. It is one of three pieces Schmitz has at the gallery, each of which are two-sided works she described as "altars," due to the personal experience they give viewers via their small size.

"I don't like to use the word 'surreal,' but they are in a way," said Schmitz, an instructor of art and art history at Northern Oklahoma College in Tonkawa. "I create a new world, an unreal world, by juxtaposing images together. I'm joining images that normally you wouldn't see into a tight space."

Each of Schmitz's pieces has multiple photographs wrapped around cylinders, which gives the images a distorted effect without any darkroom manipulation. She uses pictures from her entire photography career, dating back to when she was a teenager, letting the search through the decades of photographs move from a feeling of "chaos" to "unity."

"A new work can be comprised of photographs from many times and many places over many years, and it's almost an unconscious choice of what to choose and what should go together," Schmitz said.

For more information, call 235-4458.

—Allison Meier

Rating: Not Yet Rated

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