

Salina Journal



"La Lutxona," 2007, by Blanka Amezkua, embroidery on cotton fabric and crochet, 30 by 31 inches

Women's work



"Enormous Handful," 2006-2007, by Sarah Amos, collagraph and mixed media, 90 by 96 inches



"Curls" 2005, by Sonya Clark, black plastic hair combs, 96 by 36 inches

Women's issues are the focus for 16 female artists in exhibition

By GARY DEMUTH
Salina Journal

Through paintings, sculptures, photography, textiles and printmaking, the changing roles of women in contemporary society is explored by 16 female artists in a new exhibition opening at the Salina Art Center.

"A Complex Weave: Women and Identity in Contemporary Art" features the work of female artists from around the world as they explore gender and identity issues, the female body, geographical locations, childhood and family issues and women's accessories.

The artists range from feminists who came of age in the 1970s to young women just beginning their careers, said Salina Art Center Director Bill North.

"All of these artists are addressing gender and its relationship to identity through their work, and how complex both are," he said.

He hopes the exhibition will promote discussion and conversation.

"Hopefully, it will create a point of departure for conversation about subjects that are meaningful, important and relevant to us," he said.

"A Complex Weave" opens Feb. 22 and runs through April 21 at the Salina Art Center, 242 S. Santa Fe.

Running in conjunction with "A Complex Weave" will be a complementary exhibition, "Working on the Bias," in the Watson Gallery at the Stiefel Theatre for the Performing Arts, 151 S. Santa Fe. This exhibition features local and area female artists who also explore themes of gender and identity while incorporating stitched, embroidered or woven elements into their artwork.

A reception for both shows will be from 5 to 7 p.m. Feb. 23 at the Salina Art Center and Stiefel Theatre. Following the reception, rhythm and blues and gospel singer Mavis Staples will perform at the Stiefel Theatre.

Awareness of issues

"Working on the Bias" was organized by Watson Gallery Director Carolyn Wedel and Rachel Epp Buller of the Feminist Art Project, an international collaborative initiative celebrating the effect of women in the visual arts. Buller is the Newton-based regional director of the project.

"It's an exciting project for us to do in conjunction with the Salina Art Center, to create awareness for women's issues using differ-

ent mediums," Wedel said.

Participating in "Working on the Bias" will be Priti Cox, Karla Prickett, Jan Wilson and Wedel, all of Salina; Gerry Craig, Manhattan; Lora Jost, Lawrence; Ke-Sook Lee, Kansas City; Ruth Moritz, Lincoln; Erika Nelson, Lucas; Stacey Roller, Lincoln, Neb.; Debbie Wagner, Bennington; and Mary Werner, Wichita.

From varied backgrounds

The 16 female artists contributing to "A Complex Weave" run the gamut of age, race, religion and cultural influences, North said. "A number of them are immigrants to this country and have complex biographies," he said. "One artist is a Jewish woman raised in Mumbai (India), attended Catholic school and now lives in New Jersey. Her work deals with the complexity of these cultures."

The exhibition is organized into five thematic divisions, North said: Image and Text, where words from texts such as the Torah are superimposed over visual images focused on women; Complex Geographies, where different cultures and geographi-



"Story of Veranda — Nusumigiki," 2002, by Fujiko Isomura, mixed media on watercolor paper, 22 by 16 1/2 inches



"Finding Home, #57 — Passport Photo," 2002, by Siona Benjamin, gouache on paper, 13 by 10 inches

cal locations and its effect on women are explored; the Female Body; Childhood and Family; and Accessories, which includes items such as combs, doilies and

on the shelf:

JOY DIVISION BASSIST DELIVERS IN BOOK

• "Unknown Pleasures: Inside Joy Division" (It Books), by Peter Hook

Joy Division played only three years' worth of gigs and released two studio albums.

Still, in that limited window of time, the four 20-somethings from Britain's industrial north helped spur the '80s-era alternative rock movement.

The band was known for its dark, minimalist sound and the introspective, poetic lyrics of its enigmatic frontman, Ian Curtis, who committed suicide in May 1980, just as Joy Division was set to embark on its first U.S. tour and two months ahead of the release of its second and final album, "Closer."

Even as the trio found success without Curtis, though, his memory never was far from them.

"Unknown Pleasures: Inside Joy Division" provides a detailed history of the band.

But what sets Hook's memoir apart is its painful honesty and well-positioned focus on Curtis, who is, without a doubt, the star of the show.

"We were individuals, me, Steve and Bernard," Hook writes. "The glue that held us together, the driving force of the band, was Ian."

"This book is as much about him as it is me," Hook writes of Curtis, who struggled through medical, financial and romantic upheaval throughout Joy Division's lifespan.

The passages that detail the singer's battle with epilepsy are particularly stirring.

For Joy Division purists, the pages ooze with tales of sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll.

"Unknown Pleasures" is truly a pleasurable read.

The book works on a completely different level, though. At its core, the book is more character study than band bio.

— Associated Press

