

VISUAL NARRATIVE: Object and Story/Text and Image

September 13, 2009 - November 13, 2009



Alabama art is often closely tied to storytelling. The current exhibition features works by seven artists using a variety of materials and techniques to find new ways to tell complex visual stories. Artists in the exhibition: Joe DeCamillis, Birmingham; Dale Kennington, Dothan; Sonja Rieger, Birmingham; Teresa Rodriguez, Auburn; Spencer Shoults, Birmingham; Pat Snow, Birmingham; and Collin J. Williams, Montevallo.

Narrative art has historically used pictures to tell elements of a story, depicting tales from religion, history, myth and legend. The earliest artists told stories with pictures etched into stone or cave walls. Today, artists are looking at new ways to capture a narrative approach, often combining text with visual images, exemplified in the work by Pat Snow and Sonja Rieger. Complex painting, such as the eight paneled, double-sided screen by Dale Kennington, leaves the viewer to create a story, to answer a mystery of people and place. Joe DeCamillis adds miniature painting to altered books, giving new layers of meaning to the titles and the now unavailable text. His "Crazy Quilt" uses found materials and hardback book covers to depict the travels of Jack Kerouac across the United States. Teresa Rodriguez has created a series she calls "Road Maps", using pastel drawings and found objects to trace philosophical trails between unique beginning and end points. A triptych by Spencer Shoults reads like personal doodling using drips of paint, pencil markings and text: an unexplained story left to the viewer. Collin Williams has created large cyanotype prints on silk, combinations of words and patterns with both political meaning and private narrative.

