

L&C Art Coordinator Among the Artists Showcased in Exhibition

February 11 2015 1:21 PM



Art Coordinator Chris Brennan is among 15 L&C artists featured in this year's Art Faculty Exhibition. Photo by S. Paige Allen, Lewis and Clark Community College Photographer

GODFREY – Painter Chris Brennan is among the 15 artists being showcased during this year's Art Faculty Exhibition, which opened Friday, Feb. 6 and will run through Feb. 27 in the Hatheway Cultural Center Art Gallery.

Brennan, who turns 56 in March, of St. Louis, Missouri, is an assistant professor and coordinator of Lewis and Clark Community College's Art Department, and has been with the college for nearly 10 years. He teaches courses on drawing, painting, basic design and introduction to visual arts.

“The most rewarding part of teaching is undoubtedly the opportunity to see the growth of our students over the course of their educational experiences here,” he said. “In particular, observing the best of our students’ artwork at the annual Student Art Exhibit (coming April 2015) is always eye-opening and serves as a vivid reminder of all the hard work by students and faculty alike over the course of a year.”

Brennan is also a practicing artist, and has been for most of his life. He has regularly exhibited his work since the 1980s.

“It is this real world experience of our faculty – in creating, exhibiting and marketing their work – that contributes significantly to the strong foundational-level education that our students receive here at L&C,” he said. “The best artists are the ones who continually strive to improve and advance their work, to self-educate, and to be acutely aware of their visual experiences.”

Brennan’s paintings are a part of numerous private, corporate and institutional collections, including those of the Beach Museum of Art (Manhattan, Kansas), the Mulvane Art Museum (Topeka, Kansas), the Sprint Corporation (Kansas City, Kansas), U.S. Bank (St. Louis, Missouri), and others. His work is also represented by the Strecker-Nelson Gallery in Manhattan, Kansas.

“Most of my paintings depict urban architecture,” Brennan said. “I find it interesting that a common response to my work is one of familiarity. I often hear viewers say that they are sure they have been to this place before, when, in fact, the images are really fabrications and are compilations of elements from various sources. Three of these paintings are on display in the current faculty exhibit.”

Brennan holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Fontbonne University and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Kansas State University, both in painting. Before coming to Lewis and Clark, he taught art at Kansas State, Washburn University and Saint Louis University.

He credits colleague and Associate Professor Joe McFarlane, another artist featured in the Art Faculty Exhibition, with significantly growing the Art Department over the past several years. Today, the department offers 65-70 sections of various art classes each semester, ranging from art history to technical courses in drawing, painting, photography, graphic design and ceramics – and its offerings continue to grow.

“New this year, in addition to our faculty and student art exhibits, we are introducing a Visiting Artist Lecture Series, to be held once a month during the fall and spring

semesters in the Hatheway Cultural Center Art Gallery,” Brennan said. “The lectures will provide significant insight into the working lives of artists that is somewhat rare at many colleges, particularly community colleges.”

The series is being sponsored and presented by 1st MidAmerica Credit Union. It will begin with highly renowned St. Louis printmaker Tom Huck, who will present at 12:30 p.m. Feb. 17 in the Hatheway Cultural Center Gallery, and continue with presentations by Sculptor Preston Jackson, who is the artist behind the Miles Davis Memorial statue coming to Alton, in March, and Jenny Chi, a painter and professor in Eastern Illinois University’s Art Department, in April.

To see Brennan’s work, visitors can check out the exhibit anytime during gallery hours, which are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday.

To learn more about the Visiting Artist Lecture Series, visit www.lc.edu/visitingartists.

To learn more about the college’s Art Department, visit www.lc.edu/program/AFAart or contact Brennan directly at (618) 468-4669 or cbrennan@lc.edu.