DSU Presents Alumni Art Exhibition Sept. 1-18

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Back in the 1970s a group of aspirating artists created a strong bond during their undergraduate years at then-Delaware State; one that grew stronger over time.

The group of four DSU alumni from the 1970s as well as an art graduate from the 1990s will present their works in an Alumni Art Exhibition that will take place from Sept. 1-18 in the DSU Art Center Gallery on campus.

The exhibition will be free and open to the public from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Mondays thru Fridays during that period. A Meet the Artist Reception will take place from 5-7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 16.

The exhibition will feature the works of alumni artists Carl Williams, ’74; Mike Morris, ’75; PJ. Foster, ’71; Tony J. Burton, ’75; and Alexander Gamble, ’97. They have been specifically invited to do an alumni exhibition to coincide with the events that will take place from Sept. 15-18 in connection with the Inauguration of Dr. Harry Lee Williams as DSU’s 10th president.

The artists, who all graduated from DSU with a BA in Art Education:

Tony Burton – Currently an art teacher at Woodbridge High School in Bridgeville, Del., Mr. Burton enjoys cartooning and drawing caricatures. Over the years, he has produced cartoons for local newspapers, clubs and businesses. In the classroom, he uses his life experiences to bring an up-to-date learning philosophy to his students. He now resides in Camden, Del.

PJ. Foster – A former art instructor and a past president of the Wilmington Arts Council, Mr. Foster’s current art project is a series of aqua mixed media collages. He is also an actor who has been cast in several upcoming film projects. Mr. Foster also was a football free agent with the Houston Oilers. He is a resident of Wilmington, Del.

Alexander Gamble – This artist’s sojourn is inextricably connected to his spiritual journey, from which he has come to be a born-again Christian. His art is reflective of his life before and after that conversion. Mr. Gamble also applies art talents in his advertising business AGCagency & Freelance Advertising. He is a resident of Wilmington, Del.

Michael J. Morris, a.k.a. Mijomor – This Eastern Shore artist works with different mediums ranging from pencil to serigraphy, but his primary medium is oil. His subject matters includes people in day-to-day situations, poetry and painting combinations, landscapes, collaged images of Africa and surrealism. He also teaches visual and performing arts at Wicomico High School in Wicomico, Md. and at James M. Bennett High School. He is a resident of Salisbury, Md.

Carl V. Williams with his piece "Grace Jones in the Wind," one of his works that will be part of the Alumni Art Exhibition.

Carl Vincent Williams – A longtime resident of Wilmington, Del., his artistic style consists of graphic collages and semi-abstract lines and shapes to form his images. He works on hot and cold press watercolor paper with acrylics, inks and surprisingly, a natural material – hornet's nests. He also teaches at the Moyer Academy in Wilmington, Del.

Carl Williams said the idea of staying artistically connected by doing exhibitions together was a conversation that took place during their undergraduate year. He and Mr. Morris were the first to make it happen.

"Mike and I started out in the early 1980s by doing an exhibition together, and it kept growing," Mr. Williams said. "The core was founded with DSU artists and it was such a success, we began to relish the idea of bringing other artists on.

The joint artistic endeavor has evolved into "Points of Juxtaposition" an exhibition group which in addition to the DSU alumni includes artists from other institutions of higher education and art circles.

For the DSU alumni, the exhibition at DSU is something they have desired for some time. After an August meeting with University officials in preparation for the exhibition, the alumni artist were all reminded their greatest DSU influence and mentor – Arturo Bassols

"He was our artistic father," said Mr. Williams. "He taught us that as God created the heaven and earth, so has he given some men the gift to create, whether it be by painting, sculpture or other art."

Mr. Bassols taught at DSU from 1974 until his retirement in 2000. The department chair for much of his tenure, Mr. Bassols died after a tragic accident at his home about a year after he retired.

Mr. Morris noted that Mr. Bassols taught them both the technical and the practical sides of art. "He taught us how to survive as art teachers," Mr. Morris said. "He showed us how to teach kids without having a big budget."

Mr. Williams recalls that under Mr. Bassols the art students created the scenery for the mid-1970s DSC student production of "Purlie," and that the dividends went beyond that play.
"That scenery was later purchased by the DuPont Theatre Company, and the money went back into the Delaware State College art department.

The Alumni Exhibition will feature 33 individual works from these five artists.

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