



Thursday, January 29, 2009

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ABC - Artists of the Black Community Exhibition At West Valley Art Museum

ABC artists (Artists of the Black Community) will open their annual exhibition at West Valley Art Museum on February 6, 2009. Drawing on artists from the entire Phoenix and surrounding area, this year's exhibit continues the strong tradition this group established six years ago.

Known as ABC/Az, this organization was founded in 1980 under the direction of Dr. Eugene Grigsby. The group of artists is made up of highly skilled printmakers, painters, photographers and sculptors, with a variety of techniques and styles. Their talents cover a wide range, yet they share a unique means of expression, which is what brought the group together.

During the last decade requests from local organizations for the works by Black artists to exhibit at various functions have increased. As artists encountered one another hanging or retrieving works the need for more communication with one another was expressed. These brief one-day exhibits also demonstrated the need for artists to develop opportunities to display their artwork on a more professional basis.

On March 15, 1980, ten artists met in the Black Theatre Troupe's "Green Room". Notes of this meeting read, "...there was expressed the need to unite yet not stifle or infringe on the uniqueness of each individual." Lively discussion, and some disagreement surrounded the terms "Black Art" and "Black Artists" and was resolved with the consensus that the group be identified first as artists and next as being from the Black Community. Thus the name and acronym ABC/Az.

Each of these artists interprets Black art in his or her own unique way. And although works by the members have no common denominator of subject matter, style, or aesthetic philosophy, each in his or her own way makes a personal statement that is rooted in the "Black Experience."

West Valley Art Museum is open 10 AM to 4 PM Tuesday through Sunday. The Museum is located at West Bell Road and 114th Avenue. With nine exhibition galleries, a Museum Store, and regularly scheduled education programs, the Museum welcomes all visitors. There is an admission charge for non-members. \$7 adults, \$2 students, ages 5 and under are free.

Many of the artists showing this year such as Dee Dee Woods and Sebastiao Pereira have shown in previous years. Newcomers joining the exhibit at WVAM for the first time include: Steve "Stevo" Swindle, Stephen Mark and Bobbie McNear.



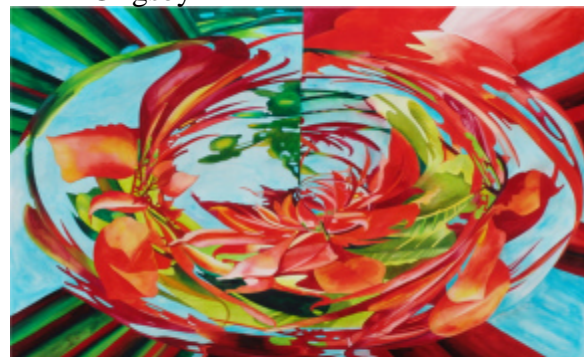
"Paradise" by Bobbie McNear



"The Family" lithograph by Dr. Eugene Grigsby



"Million Years Of Pain"
Mixed media
Steve Swindle



Watercolor
Florida Red #1
30"x44"

Sebastiao Pereira

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