

“The Animal in Contemporary Art II” at Stremmel Gallery

Exhibition dates: February 21 – March 23, 2013

Reception: Thursday, February 21, 5:30 – 7:30 pm. Free to the public.

January 31, 2013 - Stremmel Gallery proudly presents “**The Animal in Contemporary Art II.**” The opening reception for contemporary artists **Bill Braun, Bryan Christiansen, Catherine Courtenaye, Gaylen Hansen, Tom Judd, Leonard Koscianski, Ken Little, Adelaide Paul, Brad Rude,** and **Tom Uttech,** is 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., **Thursday, February 21, 2013.** Each artist incorporates animals into their respective works, capturing the playful, yet majestic spirit of the wild. Works range from oil on canvas to wood sculpture encased in leather. The show, a continuation of an exhibition in 2000, will run through March 23.

Bill Braun is a master of trompe l’oeil, French for “trick the eye.” Crumpled colored cutout paper, staples, plywood, pushpins, string, and colored pencils appear to be low-relief collage, but upon close inspection, are discovered to be acrylic paint on canvas. A native of Long Beach, California, Braun studied at the University of Nevada, Reno.

Bryan Christiansen creates life-sized contemporary sculpture that challenges conventional notions of rural life, home, the rituals of the hunting tradition, and the innocence of childhood. Discarded household furniture found in neglected urban areas becomes assemblage that stands in for trophies, antler mounts, and pelts often prized by hunters. Christiansen studied at the University of Nevada, Reno.

Catherine Courtenaye’s paintings investigate the everyday handwriting of 19th century Americans by reconfiguring these artifacts into color and artistic language. The influences of American penmanship manuals, arithmetic workbooks, and handwritten ephemera are present in her canvases. **Courtenaye’s** work can be seen locally at Reno City Hall and Renown Health.

Born in 1921, **Gaylen Hansen** has been transforming the gentle landscape of the eastern Washington Palouse into tall tales and mythical quests through narrative. Using landscapes, animals, insects, and his alter ego, “the Kernal,” [sic] **Hansen** depicts a world that is variously mysterious, dangerous, surprising, and comical. He has received several prestigious awards, including the Flintridge Foundation Awards for Visual Artists in 2001.

No stranger to Stremmel Gallery, **Tom Judd** creates paintings of birds, plants, and landscapes upon collaged fragments of antique floral wallpaper, old maps, botanical prints, maps, and sewing pattern paper. The resulting superimposed images reveal the contradictory emotions that an artifact from an earlier time may have on the modern viewer. Describing his work, **Judd** says he combines “patterns and figures to imitate the eclectic nature of our memories.”

A student of noted American painter **Wayne Thiebaud,** **Leonard Koscianski’s** paintings of snarling dogs, attacking birds, and beautiful, seemingly docile flowers are portrayed as predatory in a world of suburban neighborhoods. He has received numerous awards, including the National Endowment for the Art’s Individual Artist Fellowship, and the Rockefeller Foundation’s Bellagio Fellowship. He lives and works in Annapolis, Maryland.

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Ken Little builds sculptural figures of animals, often presented as wall-hung trophies. His primary medium? Shoes. A maroon coyote comprised of flats; a pink stag made out of high heels; a red deer encompassed in oxfords. **Little** is a nationally recognized artist who has been granted two Visual Arts Fellowships by the National Endowment for the Arts in 1982 and 1989, respectively.

Adelaide Paul creates sculptures encased in leather, drawing on her experiences working as a lab technician at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine. According to **Paul**, understanding the organization of an animal's parts on the inside vastly facilitates an accurate rendering on the outside. The leather casing presents a unique question: is it clothing or is it skin?

Brad Rude juxtaposes animals with odd concepts – an elephant, balancing on a tenuous wooden plank, atop a mechanical gear; a horse, propped on its front legs, stabilized on a unicycle. His art can be found in several prominent collections, including those of Microsoft and Nordstrom.

Over the last decade, **Tom Uttech** has emerged as one of the most admired landscape painters in America. He paints unique natural phenomenon in a realist matter, exclusive of Wisconsin's North Woods and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Wondrous convergences of color, light, landscape, and wildlife are predominant in **Uttech's** paintings. He is featured in numerous collections and museums throughout the country.

For more information, or to schedule a private viewing of “**The Animal in Contemporary Art II**” exhibition, please call **Stremmel Gallery** at 775.786.0558. For images of exhibition works, please visit us at www.stremmelgallery.com. **Stremmel Gallery** is located at 1400 South Virginia Street in Reno, Nevada. Gallery hours are 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Mondays through Fridays, and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturdays.