

Artists, protégés, debut works

Each chose local talent for concept display

By Bobbi Booker
Tribune Staff Writer

The Sande Webster Gallery selected 11 accomplished artists and asked each to choose a protégé to talk with about art, the world, and life as an artist. Each of the artists then created or collaborated on original pieces for display in "Dialogue: A Group Exhibit."

The area A-list of veteran visionaries paired with their emerging counterparts includes James Brantley and Gabriele Tiberino; Syd Carpenter and Chloe LePinchon; Kevin Cole and Eric Mack; Brian David Dennis and Nami Yamamoto; James Dupree and Jon Reinfort; Sica and Patrick Collins; Shelley Spector and Thom Lessner; Ron Tarver and Michael Froio; Larry Walker and Michael Scofield; Gary Weisman and John Greig, and John McDaniel and Karen Leon-Aponte.

"The premise of this particular exhibit was a dialogue between more seasoned artists and younger artists," explained McDaniel, who met his protégé, Leon-Aponte, earlier this year at an art show. His mixed media piece "Peristyle Concept 1" hangs alongside Leon-Aponte's work, "Camino Lurgo/Long Walk."

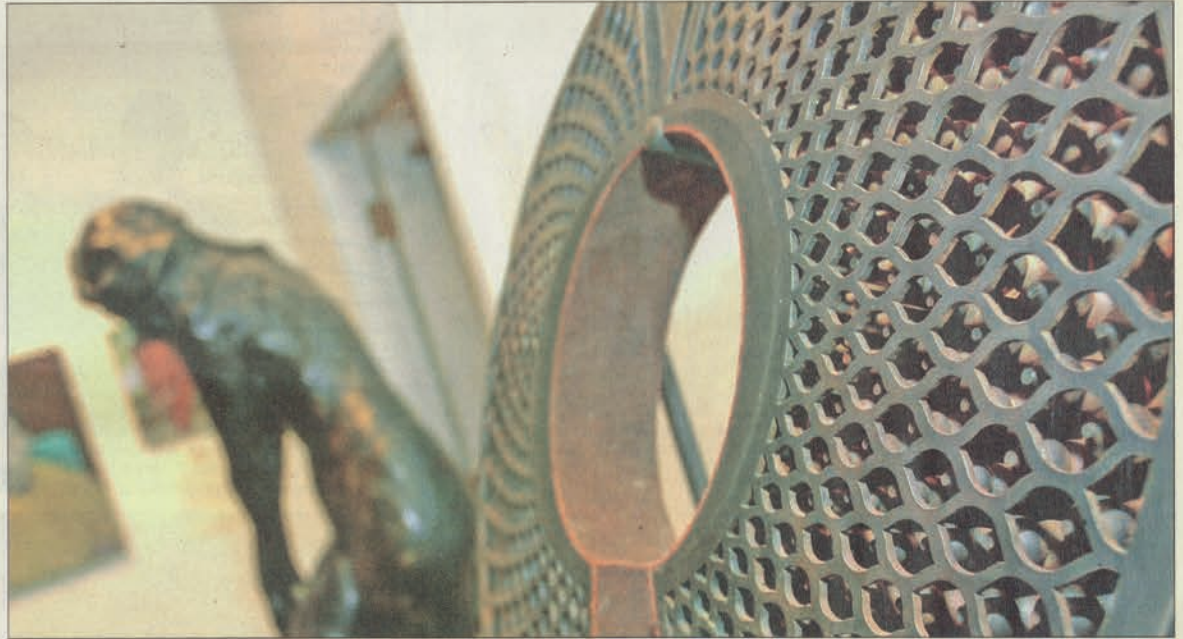
"The dialogue between John McDaniel and myself began in February of this year; it surfaced through an appreciation of the formalist aspects we both explore within abstracted visual language," wrote Leon-Aponte in her artist statement. "The syncretism we found in each other's work is primarily seen in the fusion of principles of process, spatial gestures and spontaneous and visceral responses to our color approach as well as the use of personal symbolism that reflect our individual, spiritual, political, cultural and life experiences. Our dialogue was a rewarding opportunity because it allowed us to converse and view the artistic experience through kindred eyes."

An opening reception for "Dialogue" will be held tonight from 6-8 at the Sande Webster Gallery, 2006 Walnut St. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the NAACP.

The exhibit serves to give budding artists a rare opportunity to showcase their talents along with the works of established artists.

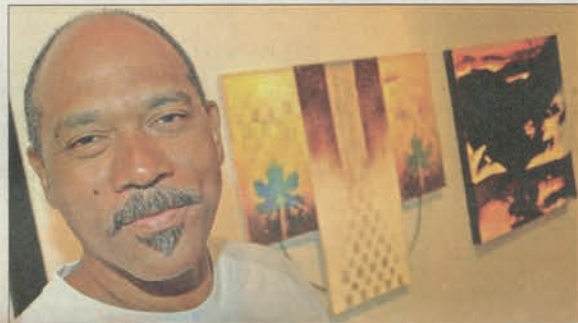
"The idea to collaborate on an art project with an esteemed artist, educator, mentor, colleague and friend was very appealing to me," said Scofield. "I'd always wanted to work with Larry Walker on a project where we would be considered equals as professional artists and have the opportunity for our work to be shown and seen in the same gallery."

Walker agreed, saying, "The exhibition



"Prisoner's yoke," a sculpted steel creation, by John Greig is displayed next to a cast-bronze sculpture of a woman by artist Gary Weisman. The metal pieces were created as part of "Dialogue," a debut exhibit that showcases the talent of budding young artists along with their mentors.

—PHOTOS/MARISA J. WEEKS/TRIBUNE STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



Artist John McDaniel stands alongside his mixed-media oil painting on canvas, titled "Peristyle Concept 1." Next to his work is a protégé's piece "Camino Lurgo/Long Walk," created in oil on canvas by Karen Leon-Aponte.

has provided an opportunity to consider the nature of our individual approaches to the visual arts, as well as an opportunity to incorporate slightly different elements into our work."

James Dupree hired Jon Reinfort as his personal assistant in 2000 and they have since worked on several murals, exhibitions and special projects. "We work together because Jon's training as a professional illustrator gave him the discipline to work both realistically and creatively, and combined well with my academic training, use of color and abstraction of composition," Dupree said.

Dupree and Renford's collaborative "Fishing for Abundance 1 and 2" resembles an oceanic view displayed through a stained-glass window. "In this collaboration, James and I discussed our direction extensively and decided to move from his fruit and ovals to fish and sea life because

of the symbolism in lighting these images afforded us," Renford said. "The lighting was similar to the glazed, stained-glass appearance of many of James' abstract paintings."

"Reaching for the Sky 1976" and "Running with Pride 3535," by Kevin E. Cole and Eric Mack evolved when the artists connected similarities in the content, color, shape and form of their work.

An interest in rock formations and respective reflections was the catalyst behind the "Boulder Field Study #1" and "Rock Panel, near Stockton, N.J." photo-art images by Ron Tarver and Michael Froio.

"Dialogue" continues through Aug. 23 with an eclectic array of artworks by emerging young talent and their accomplished mentors who've teamed up to inspire others. "You should reach out (to the younger artists)," said McDaniel. "Someone did it for me."



Artist Sica Collins worked with her son, Patrick, to develop a visual concept of Prometheus, the Titan who in Greek mythology stole fire from the gods and gave it to mortals. Patrick's work, shown above, is created as a three-dimensional acrylic painting on canvas.