

ARTREVIEW

Standing up to the test

'Timeless' has art shown before, and worth seeing again

BY KURT SHAW

Good art truly is timeless. So it is that the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh's latest group show, "Timeless," on display at Silver Eye Center for Photography, features a selection of pieces by its members that have been exhibited publicly before — in some cases, decades ago — yet, still hold up against the test of time.

Take, for example, the piece "Journey Woman" by North Hills artist Marcia Comer. Created in the late 1990s, the large ink-on-canvas piece is part of her "Flying Women" drawing series. A character she calls "Journey Woman" flies or glides above the candle flames of a menorah, representing spiritual life, and through her lifetime, "past the suns of days and into what is to come on her adventure," Comer says.

"I love to draw," Comer says, "and most of my work has been done in ink-on-canvas within the past 20 or so years. My age at the moment is 76 years and my journey has bumped along or soared — as with most people."

Like most artists, Comer says, "My joy is in my work, and my frustration, as well."

Also having spent many decades creating art, Richard McWherter of Derry shows works that date as far back as 1990.

His piece "Tenure of Clay" is from a series of photographs he created over the course of a decade titled "Sheltered Passions." McWherter, who has been teach-



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Marcia Comer's "Journey Woman" at Silver Eye Center for Photography, part of the "Timeless" exhibit.

ing high-school art in the Derry School District for about 15 years now, says the series is about "the common rituals that Americans engage in on a regular basis, either religious or secular, and is meant to document what we consider important by our participation, even if we are not always aware of the importance that we give them."

In "Tenure of Clay," a young girl is depicted attending a Catholic Ash Wednesday service for the first time.

"I asked her to close her eyes for the portrait, as if she was thinking or praying about the event," McWherter says. "I did this to take

the focus from her eyes to help show everything in the scene with better clarity."

Created in the 1980s, Bunny Pittsburgh's abstract etching "Red Night" is a "print within a print," says the artist of the deep red-and-black work, which is minimalist in nature but appears heavy in line and tone as it hangs on the wall.

"This is an artist proof I printed myself in 1980. It took two plates," Pittsburgh says. "I printed like that for years."

Although many of the pieces in the show were created in the 1980s, '90s and over the past decade,



Robin Richards' "Amalgamation"

there are a few earlier works on display, such as the large abstract oil-and-acrylic paintings by Tom Ferraro and Ron Bayuzick, respectively, which were created in the 1970s and command the back walls of the gallery space.

However, the earliest work in the show is Wess Smith's figurative collage "Summer Air," which was created in 1969, and hangs at the corner right next to Ferraro's and Bayuzick's pieces.

A delicate collage with an intricate balance of lights and darks, it's a real standout piece among the many more-colorful works on display.

"I'm 73," says the artist, who is also a past president of the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh. "I was just a few years out of graduate school when I created that. I'm color-blind, so I work in black and white, creating kind of monotone works."

Not nearly as old, Jane Haskell's piece "Compartmental Thinking" also says a lot with a simple combination of black, white and shades of gray. A digital drawing on archival paper, the work was created in Photoshop in 2010.

"I always experiment with what I can produce in either Photoshop or Illustrator, and find that both programs aid in the creation of

'Timeless'

What: An exhibit of previously exhibited artworks by members of the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh

When: Through Aug. 18, noon-6 p.m. Tuesdays-Saturdays

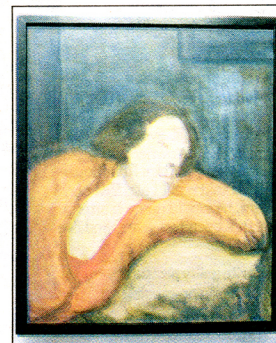
Admission: Free

Where: Silver Eye Center for Photography, 1015 E. Carson St., South Side

Details: 412-431-1810; www.silveryeye.org



Richard McWherter's "Tenure of Clay"



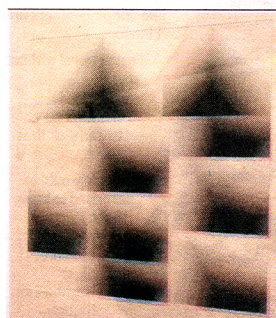
Marina Mozhayeva's "Untitled"

new and imaginative image," Haskell says.

The remaining works on display vary widely in style and medium, but they all have something about them that makes them compelling enough to stand the test of time.

These works may be timeless, but the exhibit isn't. It ends Aug. 18, so be sure to catch it before it closes.

Kurt Shaw is the art critic for Trib Total Media. He can be reached at kshaw@tribweb.com.



Jane Haskell's "Compartmental Thinking"

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