



'MURAJ FIKSAJOJ'



'AGREGÁT'

Universal communication

Ordinary shapes and forms from everyday life are reinterpreted to provide broad understanding and fresh artistic experiences

BY NANCY MOYER
SPECIAL TO THE MONITOR

Do not confuse South Texas College's "Off the Wall" exhibition with the Upper Valley Art League's exhibition of the same name.

Coincidences can sometimes be confusing, but pay attention!

Kevin Comerford has produced a series of wood and acrylic works over the past 11 years that aspire toward universality, a utopia of visual communication. The exhibit consists of oversized



Comerford

and smaller paintings with insets of geometric constructions, and some with external architectural features that enliven their

dimensional space. While these paintings are physically designed for wall placement, they become the walls themselves where integral architectural constructions create spaces jutting to the rear of the otherwise flat surfaces or appear as structural parts that augment the main painting in various directions, thereby moving "Off the Wall." They communicate a dimensional reality that mentally extends viewers' perceptions of the image.

Inspired by the idea of visual universality, Comerford uses geometric shapes and basic structures to enable his paintings to communicate with people of various cultures. An aspect of universality that attracted him has been Esperanto. Created in 1887 by patching together about 40 diverse languages, it was intended to be an international language, a universal second language for global communication. Google Translate offers Esperanto. About five of the paintings in the show have titles in Esperanto. Comerford aspires to a visual Esperanto by using angular archetypal shapes that have occurred across time in all cultures.

In this collection, ordinary shapes and forms from everyday life are reinterpreted to provide an

SURFACE TREATMENT

Kevin Comerford: 'Off the Wall'

WHERE: STC Art Gallery, Bldg. B-103, Pecan Street campus

WHEN: Through Dec. 2

HOURS: 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday

INFORMATION: artgallery@southtexascollege.edu

invitation to both visual and tactile engagement. "Muraj Fiksajoj" has a lot going on. There is color within color; Comerford uses color layers, lots of them, and in this painting, he has built them up to form an exclamation of the color blue.

It is though he is reaching for a universal blue hue, and as the layers speak quietly through subsequent layers, they ultimately reach agreement on the desired hue. The other color within the recessed spaces allows deeper contrast, subtly reinforcing his idea of spatial dimension within boundaries.

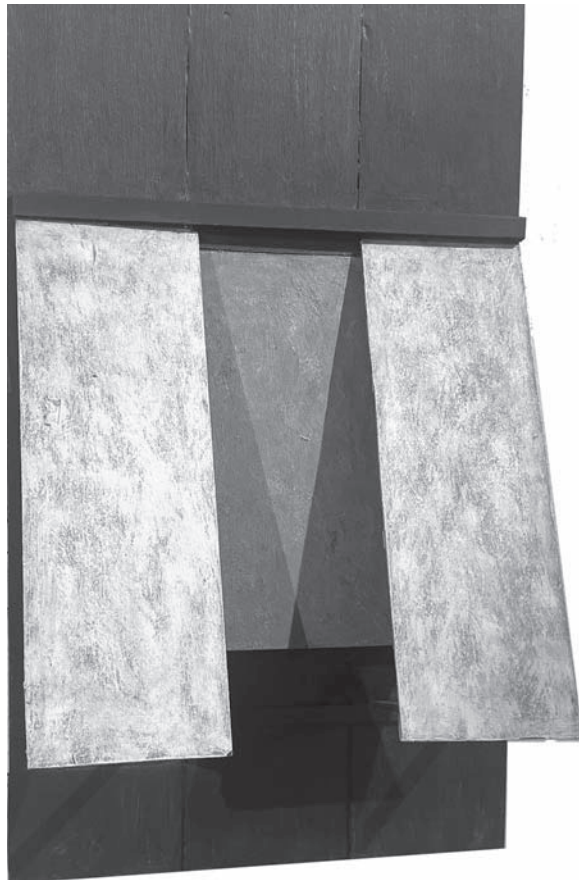
"I prefer to create more contrast with dry brush and thicker paint that gives more opportunity for contrast in my design," he mused. "There is no substitute for knowing your material and knowing how your material behaves, and I like the way

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ABOVE: 'FORTIKIGO'
LEFT: 'PARAPETO' BELOW: 'MURA PENTRAJO'





'VELARIUM II'

SURFACE

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acrylic paint dries quickly.”

He is also playing with rectangular shapes that repeatedly become reduced in width until only thin lines between blue sections remain.

Other works are more obvious in their inclusion of what the artist refers to as mechanical devices for architectural features. A constructed ladder leads to the upper part in another large work, “Fortikigo.”

The inspiration for this and other structures references traditional Southwestern folk art and architecture. The general palette for this show supports a Southwestern ambiance, and different architectural features add unexpected, but compatible, shapes.

Shadows from the gallery lighting against these works add an ephemeral dimension.

By using titles for these pieces that incorporate different languages, Comerford intends a more relevant connection to the art than the use of a single language; if the artwork is meant to be visually universal, its title should reflect the same intention.

“Making art is a complex interaction of thought and material expression,” Comerford concluded. “My deepest satisfaction comes from creating work that successfully shares this experience and contributes to our collective sense of empathy.”

Nancy Moyer, Professor Emerita of Art, is an art critic for The Monitor. She may be reached at nmoyer@rgu.rr.com.