

A week's worth of entertainment

CENTRE DAILY TIMES

Weekender & more

'Leaded'

**makes its mark with
graphite-inspired works, C17**

The Fray makes wish list
of future endeavors, C6

Manhattan Short Film Festival
harnesses power of cinema, C10

September 18-24, 2009

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arts

'Leaded' makes its mark

where to see it

through Nov. 29
Palmer Museum of Art,
University Park,
865-7672, www.palmer
museum.psu.edu

Related events

- ◆ "How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Trust the Artists" lecture by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, 4 p.m. Tuesday
- ◆ Gallery Talks by Joyce Robinson, 12:10 p.m. Sept. 25, Oct. 23 and Nov. 13
- ◆ Presentation on creative process by artist James Busby, 2:30 p.m. Nov. 17
- ◆ exhibit discussion and drawing exercises by art instructor Jennifer Dowlin Kelly, 7 p.m. Dec. 3

By Michelle Isham
For the CDT

The tower, at once gothic and modern, rises 6 feet from the floor. Its spires are capped in sharp points and constructed entirely of pencils. The sculpture is one of more than 40 contemporary artworks by 16 international artists in the exhibit "Leaded: The Material and Metamorphosis of Graphite" now on display at Palmer Museum of Art.

Curated by N. Elizabeth Schlatter, deputy director and curator of exhibitions at the University of Richmond Museums, in Virginia, "Leaded" looks beyond drawing to explore the many forms that graphite can take, including sculpture and sketch. The exhibit is divided into three themes: graphite as sculpture, graphite as content, and graphite as transformative agent.

"I wanted to put together a show about drawing that wasn't about drawing," Schlatter said.

"Drawing is a very elemental impulse. Children doodle. This expands what that impulse is," Palmer Museum curator Joyce

Robinson said.

The tower, by Michael Galbreth and Jack Massing, who together are known as The Art Guys, called "Bonded Activity #55 (Skyscraper)," turns the mundane into something astonishing by using pencils literally as building blocks. The sculpture represents, the artists say, "a tribute to a common tool — the pencil."

In a similar way, Michael Creighton's "Squiggle Series" takes something impermanent and ephemeral such as a pencil doodle and makes it concrete and three-dimensional. Formed of curving cylindrical pieces of graphite that intertwine along the floor and wall of the gallery, Creighton brings a new perspective to the common activity of doodling.

Schlatter said the exhibit was inspired in part by pieces by Hsin-Hsi Chen, of whose artwork she is a fan.

"I had been seeing her work and really admired it. She does these wonderful M.C. Escher-like drawings," Schlatter said.

The exhibit features Chen's series of eight tiny, three-dimen-

sional pencil-on-paper drawings.

The artwork in "Leaded" ranges from intimate small-scale pieces such as Chen's to large-scale works that stretch up to 6 feet long, such as Mark Sheinkman's "4 11 2007." With that piece, Sheinkman toys with the notion of drawing by layering oil, alkyd and graphite on canvas and then stripping away the the graphite rather than adding it to create an image of gracefully swirling smoke-like lines.

Like Sheinkman, many of the artists represented in the exhibit explore the idea of what it means to make a mark by turning the idea on its head. Stephen Sollins uses graphite to obscure everything but a few small images on pages

from a few product illustrations from a camping supply catalog. What's left — a few illuminated tents in an imposing field of darkness — becomes Sollins's witty commentary on the fragility of humanity.

Molly Springfield puts pencil to paper to create painstaking replicas of pages from photocopied books to toy with the idea originality. Her work asks the question, if a person creates a sketch by duplicating a photocopy, is her work now a copy or an original?

According to Schlatter, the familiarity of the medium helps make some of the more conceptual works more approachable for visitors to the exhibit.

"I like it when you have something familiar that people are familiar with, something they feel comfortable with and then they can branch off from there," Schlatter said.



Photo provided

Works on display in "Leaded: The Materiality and Metamorphosis of Graphite" include "December," above, by Meghan Gerey; "Bonded Activity #55 (Skyscraper)" by Michael Galbreth and Jack Massing, right; and "4 11 2007" by Mark Sheinkman, cover.

