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Art show features local artist

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TNE WRITER

The Visitors' Center Gallery at the NSU Broken Arrow campus is showing 24 pieces of art by NSU alumna Judith Emerson.

Christee Jenlink, dean of the Broken Arrow campus, said the gallery opened with the administration building in 2002. Jenlink also said although it has been used for several other events, there has been a focus to exhibit art in the gallery this year. Emerson is the fourth exhibit that has been held in the gallery. Other exhibits have featured school teachers and Broken Arrow Public Schools students.

There is a wide variety of styles at the Broken Arrow art show. Emerson said the 24 pieces include paintings, both oil and acrylic, drawings, including pastel and conte, and some mixed media pieces.

Emerson is a Tahlequah native who said she was always drawing as a child. After earning her degree from NSU, she formally trained as an artist. She trained in Florence, Italy and Paris, France. She then attended the Art Students League of New York, a school which Georgia O'Keeffe and Jackson Pollock also attended.

Emerson said many of her works have Native American influences. She also said her art is influenced by her dreams and imagination. She enjoys figure drawing, such as the human form, because of her formal training.

Emerson said she used to be an adjunct professor at UCO, where she taught drawing and also Native American art history. Emerson's website said she also used to work for the Smithsonian and she was a consultant for the Philbrook Museum in Tulsa.

Emerson recently finished a novel called "The Myth Makers." According to the book it is set during the 1830s. Quoting from the back cover of the book, "The Cherokee struggled to re-vitalize their ancient religion amidst witchcraft, missionaries, and white intrusion of every kind. The Myth Makers, a family saga, explores the resulting fractured myths."

The book is on sale at the bookstore of both campuses. The cost of the book is \$25.

The reason the art show came about was because Emerson went to hang posters for a book signing. The people at the Broken Arrow campus then found out she had done the cover art for her book, "The Myth Makers". They then offered Emerson this opportunity. The cover art on "The Myth Makers is an acrylic painting called "Shapeshift 1."

"I am happy to be doing something with NSU because it was a large part of my education experience," Emerson said.

Emerson said.

Billie Jo Townsend works for Enrollment Services at NSU Broken Arrow. She went to the gallery because she likes art. Townsend said she noticed many skeletons which made her think the paintings had a halloweenish feel to them. Townsend also said there was lots of color used. She said that her favorite piece was a mostly pink mixed media piece called "Shapeshift 5." Townsend said that her least favorite piece is a painting called "Cooweescoowee."

Micah Barker, Broken Arrow graduate student, said he went to the gallery because he went by it regularly. One major theme he noticed was coexistence between people and animals. Barker recommends others visit the gallery. He thinks that Emerson is a good artist. Barker said his favorite piece is one called "Prayers." His least favorite piece is a small one called "Totem 3."

Emerson said although there is



Courtesy Photo

Judith Houston Emerson's piece "The Sleeping Warrior" is a classic example of Emerson's work that will be on display.

no definitive closing date on the exhibition, she thinks the show will run through mid February.

For more information e-mail Michael Lopez at lopez03@nsu-ok.edu.

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