

Brauer museum exhibits new art

Four fresh displays adorn VU gallery

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The Brauer Museum of Art held a reception for their four new exhibits, which was heavily attended by students, faculty and members of the community at 2 p.m. Saturday. Gregg Hertzlieb, director of the Brauer Museum, introduced the artist and exhibits to a round of applause.

Perhaps the most eye-catching exhibit was "The Healing Pool: An Installation," by Brian Knep. Acquired and curated by Robert Sirko, it's essentially a glowing pad with bacteria-like shapes. With skilled programming and the beauty it produced, this piece stood as a perfect marriage of technology and art.

Sirko discovered the piece when searching online for organic art. In his opening speech,

Hertzlieb described the Healing Pool and what it stands for.

"It's a new medium. As you walk across the mat, you see a kind of digital trail behind you, closing up and healing soon after. Interactive," Hertzlieb said.

Tucked away to the side in a dark room lies one of the more intense pieces, "Other State: A Claudette Roper Video Installation," a creation by none other than Claudette Roper. Curated by Elizabeth Wuerffel, viewers of this piece can come in at any time, as the videos run on a loop with no direct starting piece.

Attached to the walls are multiple televisions screens. From the screens come the voices of 40 black Americans of varying backgrounds and ages, focused on their lips moving so as to focus the

message upon what they're saying and not what they look like.

According to Roper, these voices tell stories of pain, of confusion and of experience - all woven into a tapestry describing race relations. During the reception, Roper described the message she hopes to convey.

"I wanted to create a platform for the truth. Coming from a television background, I came to realize that there are only certain voices heard," Roper said about her vision for the piece.

The aptly titled "Mindless Mayhem: The Art of Ron Villani" was curated by Hertzlieb. When Hertzlieb approached Villani with the idea of a show, Villani surprised him by producing completely new works for the show.

These new works are displayed

alongside older pieces in the exhibition.

"All of the paintings were done in 2011," Villani said. "The banners were done in 2010. The robots were done in 2009. I guess I had phases."

Villani's art is described as being very dark, with an almost comic-book style depicting robots, disfigurements and masked men. Hertzlieb best described the premise of these paintings.

"It's got sci-fi. It's got fantasy in it. But it's also socially connected. There are messages behind it," Hertzlieb said.

Lastly, there was "The Art of Jeanette Pasin Sloan," curated by Hertzlieb with assistance from Gloria Ruff. VU owns the artist's full archives and displayed a selection for this exhibition.

"I was familiar with Jeanette Pasin Sloan as an art student. Her still life is just amazing," Hertzlieb said.

Sloan gave a brief explanation of her work and how she began painting at the exhibition.

"I studied art history in school. I wasn't really trained as an

artist. I started a family, and during that time I wanted to learn to paint. I did this by copying every object in my apartment . . . I got interested in the reflections in the objects. The reflections really became the subject," Sloan said.

If there is a theme to the four exhibits, it's diversity.

"The theme would be variety. If they (the audience) don't really like one thing, they'll always have another. I guess it would be a desire to expand people's idea of art," Hertzlieb said. With such differing mediums and completely different styles, this is hard to deny.

The four exhibitions, which opened Dec. 2, will exhibit in the Brauer Museum of Art until March 18, 2012. Two exhibit artists, Claudette Roper and Ron Villani, will come to VU again as part of the Department of Art's "Gallery Talk" series Jan. 16 and Jan. 18, respectively.

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Gregg Hertzlieb
Brauer Museum Director

