

out span 16 years of Curtis' painting career and do not include "Let the Waves Take Me." All acrylic on wood, they incorporate male and female figures, but no explicit nudity.

Joining Curtis in the City Hall exhibit is Jennifer Billig, who also deals with the human body, although in a much different context. She's established herself as one of the city's most sought-after tattooists, specializing in flowers and plants (including a pair of figs that resides on my upper back). Billig, 36, works in inanimate media as well. Some of her series of woodcut prints of agriculturally invasive weeds will adorn the walls of city commissioners' offices.

"These images are sort of single plant portraits," she says. "The concept of 'weed' kind of depends on who's defining it. Whether a plant is a weed or not depends on your perspective and what you're trying to grow and what you're trying to accomplish."

Asked why she chose these particular pieces for the Pride show, Billig says it came down to a question of size and what she had framed. "I don't feel like my gayness defines my work or vice versa," she explains. "Obviously, it informs my life and it's part of who I am, but I don't do art about being gay."

Although she holds a degree in printmaking from New York's Pratt Institute, Billig has been working with wood for more than 20 years. "I like woodcut because I can take it with me to work on it. I don't have to be stuck in a studio to be doing it," she says, adding that she worked on the mahogany plywood cuts for this series of prints on campsites near Detroit Lake and Middle Santiam.



Gregory Carrigan says his collage work allows him to tell stories: "If you start to look at it, you realize that there's gay plots in it that you can kind of read."

This show might be bittersweet for Billig, however, because she and her partner will be leaving Oregon after nine years in the fall to relocate to Billig's home state of Arkansas so she can be closer to her family.

"It's going to be really interesting going to Pride somewhere small," she says. "[But] being around my family is important to me, more so than being in a cultural comfort zone."

Collage artist Gregory Carrigan, 55, is also a Portland transplant. He came to Oregon from his native Las Vegas in 1979 and says he's here to stay.

"The longer I stayed, the more I fell in love with Oregon," he says. "I couldn't leave now; it's my home."

Carrigan says he's a painter at heart, but collage work allows him to tell stories. The piece he's

chosen for the City Hall show is one you might want to stare at for a while. In the foreground is a shirtless man Carrigan identifies as a Cuban wrestler posing in front of a red car. Fast food, bunny suits and a big green dinosaur are just some of the images in this teeming composition.

"There's a lot of little stories you can make up

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