

IS EROTIC ART MEANINGFUL OR VULGAR?

Clatsop Community College's 11th annual international juried exhibition 'Au Naturel' asks viewers to decide

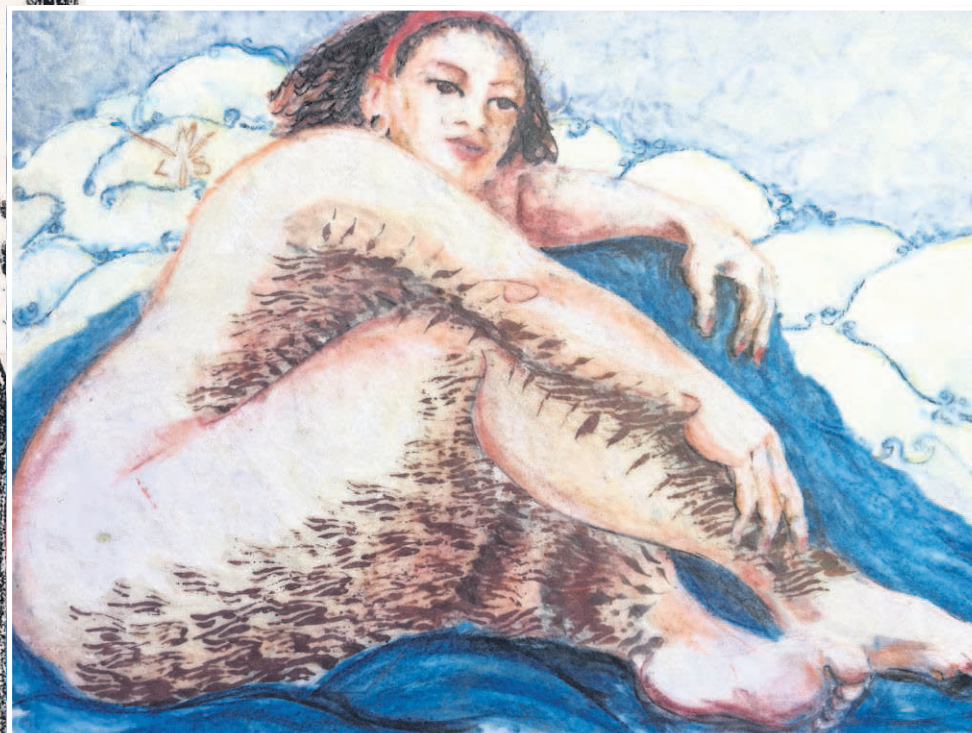
By DWIGHT CASWELL

The international juried exhibition that is "Au Naturel: The Nude in the 21st Century" returns for its 11th year, with an opening at 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9 at Clatsop Community College's Royal Nebeker Gallery. This year's juror, Daniel Duford, is the visiting associate professor of art at Reed College, a 2010 Hallie Ford Fellow, and recent recipient of an Art Matters grant. Duford has assembled what may be the best show yet, and he has also for the first time edged "Au Naturel" into a zone that many will label erotic.

Surely the star of this year's "Au

Naturel" is the quality of draftsmanship, which avoids the pitfall described by Henri Matisse: "When an artist or student draws a nude figure with painstaking care, the result is drawing, and not emotion." There is plenty of emotion in this show.

Thomas Jackson's "Man" is a work of strongly felt, simplified realism. The artist's approach is to apply lines and marks with strong gestures, "working without a net," he calls it. "Viewers of these drawings are reminded," he continues, "of body-related social and political issues: perceptions of ideal beauty and society's pressure to attain that ideal; the relentless use of the youthful human body in marketing; sexuality, gender identification or ambiguity, body image, relationship



"Birch Sketch #4" by Roger Walkup of Baltimore, Maryland.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

"Dragon Scales" by Lisette Sanchez of Lake Forest Park, Washington.

SUBMITTED PHOTO