

Family Living

The Laura Russo Gallery Is Pleased To Present:

Robert Colescott
Paintings and Works on Paper
Suzanne Duryea
Recent Work
Robert Colescott

Nationally recognized artist, Robert Colescott, is known for his controversial paintings challenging both racial and gender stereotypes. His expressive, cartoon-like portrayals of American slices of life contain poignant and thought-provoking images. Colescott paints a version of popular culture while exhibiting at the Whitney's Art About Art show with paintings such as George Washington Carver Crossing the Delaware. In his 70s, he still wrestles with societal clichés and prejudices, but it is in the last ten years he has questioned contemporary issues in a more personal way. Featured in this exhibition will be acrylic paintings and works on paper.

Robert Colescott teaches at the University of Arizona and is revered nationally with work in collections such as the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Metropolitan Museum of Art; Whitney Museum of American Art; Brooklyn Museum of Art; Hirshhorn Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Seattle Art Museum; and Portland Art Museum, OR. His early education found him in France in the 1950s studying with Fernand Léger. In 1973 he was honored with a retrospective at the University of Washington, Henry Art Gallery. Colescott shows regularly in New York with the Phyllis Kind Gallery.

Running concurrently with Robert Colescott's exhibition is an exhibition of his work at the Portland Art Museum from January 15th - March 21, 1999.

Suzanne Duryea

Suzanne Duryea is known for painting luscious and vibrant still-lives depicting fruit, vegetation, and other domestic objects. The paint is applied thickly-impasto with intense color that glows. The objects are rendered with a solidity usually reserved for sculpture. They are mystical, larger than life, enhanced by their lively energy and anchored to a timeless, other world. This exhibition features a new direction; depicting the figure but in the same vibrant manner.

Duryea spent many years in Portland before moving to her present home in Florida. Her paintings have been exhibited in galleries along the west coast in Portland, Seattle, and San Francisco, and are in many private and public collections, including Microsoft; the Governor House, Olympia; the Claremont Hotel, Berkeley; and the Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles.

Opening reception is First Thursday February 4: First Thursday Hours, 5-8pm. For more information contact Faith Emerson 503-226-2754.



Robert Colescott



Suzanne Duryea

DISNEY CHANNEL HONORS BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Disney Channel, the leader in television for kids and families, honors Black History Month this February with special lineup of original movies and an animated featurette on February 2. Additionally, the network will cablecast Disney Channel's critically-acclaimed original special, *One Day*, on February 6, and the world television premiere of the animated special *Koi & the Kola Nuts*, narrated by Whoopi Goldberg, on February 10.

On February 2, 7PM ET/PT, Disney Channel kicks off its Black History Month celebration with the world television premiere of the animated featurette *John Henry*. Narrated by Denzel Washington and featuring music by B.B. King, *John Henry* tells the tale of an African American hero who journeys cross-country, and along the way, discovers men of all races who've joined together to help build a railroad. Immediately following, Disney Channel presents its original *Nightjohn*, 7:30 PM ET/PT. This depicts the mythic story of a slave in the pre-Civil War South who believes that literacy can be a weapon against the mental and physical barriers of slavery. *Nightjohn* courageously defies the law which forbid the teaching of reading and writing to slaves. To complete the lineup, the network will air another Disney Channel original movie, *On Promised Land* is the story of two families, one black and one white, and the dream and broken promises that bind them

together.

On February 6, Disney Channel will cablecast the original special *One Day*. Directed by Debbie Allen, the special films star Loretta Devine (*Waiting To Exhale*), Ed Begley Jr. and James Ingram, and features original music by acclaimed gospel artists Kirk Franklin and God's Property. *One Day* celebrates Martin Luther King, Jr.'s vision to promote tolerance and equality for everyone regardless of creed, race or gender. As four youths prepare for a television program, they are guided on a magical tour. On their journey, they discover the importance of eradicating injustice for everyone, and that they must follow their own dreams in life.

Additionally, on February 10, 7PM/PT, Disney Channel presents the world television premiere of the animated special *Koi & the Kola Nuts*. Narrated by Whoopi Goldberg, this humorous African folktale tells the story of Koi, a villager who is faced with either accomplishing three impossible tasks, or ending up in the cooking pot instead. Along his journey, he makes three unlikely friends who save his life and help him find his rightful place in the world.

Disney Channel, combining original series, movies and specials with timeless classics, is the first general entertainment television network designed for kids and families. Disney Channel is a subsidiary of The Walt Disney Company.

LIBRARY STORYTIME FOR ADULTS

"Here, There, Everywhere: Storytime for adults" at Multnomah County Library's Central Library kicks off Sunday, Jan. 24 at 2 p.m. with a program of dramatic readings entitled "Beginnings: First Chapters by Contemporary Authors." Selections include "Bag of Bones" by Stephen King; "Dreamland: Travels inside the Secret World of Roswell and Area 51" by Phil Patton; and "At Home in the World: A Memoir" by Joyce Maynard. Selections will be read by Portland actors Jacque Drew, Stephen Clark Pachosa and Tom Lasswell.

On Sunday, Feb. 21, the program will be "Matters of the Heart: Short Stories on Loving, Longing and Losing," read

by Alan Nause, Vana O'Brien and Earl Taylor.

On Sunday, March 21, the program will be "Twain Spotting: Favorite Selections From the Work of Mark Twain."

The storytime series features dramatic readings of selections from literature (old and new) on a single theme by local actors. Storytimes are held in the third Sunday of each month at 2 p.m. in the Collins Gallery located on the third floor of Central Library, 801 S.W. 10th Ave., Portland. Storytimes are free and open to the public and are funded through gifts to the Library Foundation, Inc.

For more information, call (503) 248-5236.

DANZY SENNA In Her Own Words

The contradictions in my family were always apparent to me: the unlikely mix of WASP and African-American, privileged and poor, literary and activist. But it was the contradictions in my own life that most confounded me: the experience of "looking white" and identifying as black. My mother, a white poet and novelist, and my father, a black scholar of race and history, were both smitten with the black power politics of the 1960s and 70s, and believed that a strong black identity was the way to help my siblings and me survive the racism of the world. But while for my sister, the black power chants seemed to fit in with her skin and hair, for me, my Afrocentric proclamations were met with mostly confusion and sometimes derision from the world outside.

Growing up in Boston, I became familiar with a brand of racism foreign to my sister and father: the candid remarks of white people who thought I was "one of them." Little white girls brought

me home for dinner to listen to derogatory comments about "niggers" and "spics." Liberals who smiled in my sister's face whispered to me behind her back about the problem with "those people." I developed a deep suspicion of most whites, and often yearned for a visible trace of my blackness, a signifier that would tell the world who I was, so that I could avoid having to see people's true colors. While

Ralph Ellison had once written of the experiences of an "invisible man," I felt myself to be an "invisible sister" - a spy in enemy territory, and a ghost among those with whom I identified the most.

I was most comfortable at home,

where chaos ruled. There, my mother would have us kids full reign, and allowed children's forts and doll kingdoms to overrule any semblance of order. She often sat with the door to her bedroom open, so she could keep one

eye on us and the other on the page before her. The sound of her fingertips tapping against the keyboard of her manual Olympia typewriter was the music that let us know she was always close at hand. She was also a political activist, and our house became both a salon and a refuge for the African dissidents and Irish exiles

who came to stay with us when I was very young: a small picture of Che Guevara sat framed in our hallway next to a yellowing poster advertising a Dublin production of Tom Stoppard's "Travesties." Political activists and poets alike sat around our kitchen until late into the night arguing the benefits and consequences of racial integration, while Motown music spun out from the living room stereo. At home, it was clear to me which tribe I belonged to: that of my own eccentric family.

It was when I left home that I had to navigate the color-coded world. Without my kin surrounding me, reminding me who I was, I had to find other ways to feel at home. Writing became this home-black words against white paper-the space where I could both make sense of and escape from the problems of my everyday existence. It was there, at my desk, with a typewriter and the cold Northeastern landscape

beyond my window, that my racial perspective-this unsolved conundrum-became my strength rather than my weakness. Fiction freed me from my own strength rather than my weakness. Fiction freed me from my blood and from my own experience, allowing me to enter the realm of the invisible-the imagination.

I wrote CAUCASIA in part to grapple with the problem of race-which is essentially the problem of the spirit in the material world. I wanted to explore the constructedness of race through the eyes of a character who, like myself, is "everything and nothing" at once. What has become clear to me through my racial trials and tribulations, is that at some point you do make a choice-not between white and black, but between silence and speech. Do you let your body talk for you, or do you speak for yourself? Through fiction, I have found a way to speak for myself-and to embrace the contradictions that define my world.

