



JENNIFER SHOPE/The Johnsonian

'Darkness Illuminated' is displayed in the Elizabeth Dunlap Patrick Gallery. Kit Kube, who is a self-taught artist from Charlotte, N.C. created this artwork and the piece will be on display until March 29.

'Darkness Illuminated' brightens gallery

BY KRISTYN EDWARDS

SPECIAL TO THE JOHNSONIAN

Fluid shadows dance on the white walls of Rutledge Gallery, cast by motorized artwork almost invisible in the murky gloom. Kit Kube's show, entitled "Darkness Illuminated," explores the conflict between light and darkness, movement and stillness, art and science. Each piece has its own story, but it is incorporated into the collective consciousness of the entire show.

"This is one of the best shows we've ever had. It transforms the traditional gallery setting," said Myers Mackenzie, a senior sculpture major at Winthrop. "Kube's pieces, made with materials rescued from scrap yards, are fascinating, but the real power of his art comes with his ability to move beyond the conventional display, which is typically focused on the piece itself, to explore the effects of movement and shadow."

Kube gives further insight to his art.

"I use the movement [of the piece] as bait for my audience, which I sometimes consider as prey. I want them to be drawn into the piece," he said.

Kube, who is from Charlotte, N.C., is a self-taught artist, but he draws on his engineering experience to create his art. He spent 20 years building hands-on, interactive exhibits for museums such as the Charlotte Natural Museum and Discovery Place. However, about ten years ago, he became disillusioned with the business and started creating personal art.

Kube admits that he likes creating kinetic light sculptures because they "have that element of randomness that's so intriguing and to me, so beautiful." He finds inspiration everywhere: in the stars, a jug of molasses, or - most frequently - in the junk yard.

"Binary Bliss," in which steel balls lit by fluorescent LED lights cast rotating rainbows on the white wall, was inspired by Kube's fascination with astronomy.

"Wet Miniscus" was created after he saw the light patterns cast by a jug of molasses, which Kube emphasized by replacing natural sunlight with lasers.

These pieces display what might seem to be a more interesting source of inspiration, but Kube never knows what he might find at the scrap yard. "Circadian Snare" is made of stencils used to create computer boards and gives the illusion of a constantly changing cityscape. "Intimately Distant" uses brass heat exchangers that rotate in two planes, which cast mesmerizing shadows on the canopy overhead. "Wanderlust" was created from stainless-steel hip replacements.

Rohena Khan, a junior art-general studio major from Bangladesh said that this is her favorite piece in the show.

"It's like junk, and he made use of it," she says.

She admits that she didn't really care for the piece until she discovered it was made of hip replacements.

"It just gives it a whole new meaning," Khan said.

Kube views his art not as a passive medium, where the



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Kit Kube's artwork is made from materials he rescues from scrap yards.

audience should come and simply observe, but rather as an active medium that the audience should interact with. "[My art] is somewhere between a performance, somewhere between sculpture," Kube said.

Tom Stanley, the director of Winthrop University galleries, believes that this interplay, coupled with the distinctive use of space, displays Kube's ingenuity and imagination.

"He has kind of a genius for this," Stanley said. The director views the Rutledge gallery as a theatrical stage, and welcomes diverse artwork.

"This is a great opportunity to have an alternative project in a traditional space," he said.

Winthrop University's Rutledge Gallery will be hosting Kit Kube's "Darkness Illuminated" show until March 29. For more information on Kit Kube, please visit his Web site at Kit-kube.com.

Local theater still dealing with set back from fire

BY MIKE VICK

STAFF WRITER

Though the stage is gone, the people at the Rock Hill Community Theatre (RHCT) are not deterred. RHCT lost its building to a fire Sunday, Feb. 11.

"Since the fire that happened on Sunday, we have rallied to make sure that we don't miss a beat," said Steve Thrift, president of the RHCT.

The theater made provisions with Rawlinson Road Middle School to finish their dates for their "David Copperfield" production. As of now the theater is without a permanent home, lighting and costuming equipment.

"Despite having to find an alternate location, building a "portable" set and having last minute costuming, the show went very well," Thrift said.

The fire also claimed several items, including costumes that the university had lent the RHCT. Even though the RHCT wants to rebuild, some things are irreplaceable.

"What I'm really upset about is that the archives burned down," said Annie-Laurie Wheat, a theater professor on the RHCT board of directors. "There are irreplaceable programs, costumes and other priceless pieces form the RHCT past that we'll never see again."

The university has not stood by idly while the RHCT suffered. Since the fire, the university has offered support in the form of space for an auditioning class.

It's not just the university extending a helping hand. Many members of the Rock Hill community have offered aid.

Next on the horizon is a benefit dinner to be held at the Rock Hill Center for the Arts on March 27. The dinner will include a dance and silent auction. Tickets are available on the RHCT's Web site and are \$50 a person.

"The dinner has always been on the calendar, but with the new emergency, it's just that much more important that everyone come out and have a bite to eat with us," Wheat said.

The RHCT also has established a fire relief fund to aid them in getting new equipment and a performance space for their upcoming production.

"We're working hard to put everything in place for the future," Thrift said. "While that will take some time, we're committed to seeing that RHCT lives on and thrives in the future."

The next large production that the RHCT is gearing up for is "Steel Magnolias" by Robert Harling. Practices start this week for the production at Trinity Bible Church.

"I'm hopeful that everything will go real well as we are asking the schools and churches for help in finding a space to perform," Thrift said.

Though the spots both on the production and acting side have been filled for "Steel Magnolias", there is still a need for volunteers

Russell Luke, a theater faculty member, has also directed plays for the RHCT.

"I can say that over the years I have attended a number of the theater's productions and have always been impressed with the quality of their work and the devotion of the volunteers," Luke said.

With all that has happened to the RHCT in the last few weeks, Thrift is hoping that the relationship the theater has with the university will hold strong and that the two will continue to help each other.

"Winthrop has and continues to be an important partner for the RHCT. We believe that our partnership will only grow stronger in the future as we find ways to work together that benefit both organizations," Thrift said.

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**-STEVE THRIFT
PRESIDENT**