



art E

Experience



Volume 4, Spring 2011



Cover Art:
Ansen Seale



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www.mcallenartscouncil.com
www.mcallenarts.com

The McAllen Arts Council is dedicated to supporting and encouraging the development of a city wide arts culture and infrastructure that includes all disciplines of the arts. This support and encouragement will improve the city's quality of life through promoting and enhancing creativity, education and the appreciation of the arts.

Membership is free to McAllen Chamber of Commerce members and \$25.00 annually for all others.

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Art E Magazine

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Art E welcomes proposals for articles that support the mission of the McAllen Arts Council. Inquiries should be addressed to lewis1997@hotmail.com.

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A Musical Nature

Carl Seale

It is not difficult to believe scientific studies showing that music predates speech in man's evolution. While hunting, early humans signaled to each other by pounding on hollow logs and blowing across reeds. Bows and arrows used to kill food became musical instruments around the camp fire. Striking the bow's string with an arrow created a sound that accompanied man's own primitive tones as we celebrated the kill. Acknowledging nature as the source of materials used in music making, we recognize that it is impossible to separate art and especially music from the natural world.

Art E asked me to write about my experience composing two orchestral works associated with nature. Two public entities each requested a composition. The first was "Jewels of a Land Alive" for the Valley Land Fund for general promotional use and the second, "A Winged Adventure," was for the McAllen Parks and Recreation Department for the opening celebration of Quinta Mazatlan also known as the McAllen Wing of the World Birding Center.

My son, Ansen Seale, is a photographer and designer of multimedia presentations. Together, we created DVD presentations that feature my orchestral compositions illustrated with video and still pictures of nature. "A Winged Adventure" has photographs of South Texas birds in their natural environment. The premier performance, of this twenty-minute work, took

place in the meadow, under the stars, at Quinta Mazatlan in March, 2003. You can request to view the video at Quinta Mazatlan. "Jewels" is a work that deals with the wildlife of the Rio Grande Valley. Both performances are by the Valley Symphony Orchestra directed by Maestro Peter Dabrowski.



Photos by Seth Patterson

For those of you who might be interested in the process of creating the DVDs, I have listed our activities for the two works mentioned:

- We agreed on an outline of a creature's passage through a twenty-four hour period.

- We consulted our sources that housed the photos we wanted to use.

- I decided on the mood for each of the movements.

- Studying the images, I composed using a computer with a music notation program that enables me to see the score as I create and also to hear what I have written in whole or in part.

- I recorded the music on to a CD which went to the video lab where Ansen completed assembling the images using the timing of the music to the proper lengths of the images.

- Waiting for this process to be completed I extracted and printed the individual orchestra parts making ready for the rehearsals.

- Rehearsal with the projection of the images called for close attention



to moving the video to coincide the tempo of the music to the length of time the proper image is on the screen.

Art E asked me how nature inspires me to create a composition. I would say that motivation is a better word to use than inspiration. I believe in labor as opposed to dreaming. The concept, of a creative artist, of any kind, pen or brush in hand, staring at the ceiling, waiting for that inspirational word or note or idea to arrive any moment, is about as far from reality as it can be. I believe that every moment I wait for an idea to come is a moment I could be actively generating my art.

Music is an abstract art dealing with sounds and we should realize that trying to associate it with things like nature or stories or emotions is artificial.

This is not to say that making such associations is wrong and that it should not be done. Vivaldi did it quite successfully with “The Four Seasons.” Others have followed his example with success. His intent was to stir the listener’s emotions the same as if he were experiencing nature. Block out the written and spoken titles and program notes that make up the association with nature and you still have the magnificent sounds that give the experience its real meaning.

Listen to “A Winged Adventure”
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlfJdNErb18>

Find out more about Dr. Seale and find links to excerpts of his music at www.carlseale.com





Second only to the visual arts, and painting in particular, music would seem to be the artistic expression most associated with nature.

Readers interested in a starter bibliography of music that has an association with things of the natural world might consider the entries below.

Starter List of Music Associated With Nature

The Four Seasons - a suite of movements called a concerto for solo violin and string orchestra by Antonio Vivaldi. It is in fact four concertos of three movements each. It reflects the emotions of the seasons.

La Mer (The Sea) - a tone poem by Claude Debussy

The Carnival of the Animals - a group of pieces by French composer Camille Saint-Saens. He wrote it for his grandchildren for two pianos and small string ensemble.



Each movement describes in musical terms an array of animals from a turtle to a chicken to a lion among others. Once its popularity was established he expanded it into a larger format.

Symphony in b-flat major - a four movement symphonic composition subtitled (Spring) by the composer Robert Schumann.

Symphony No. Six (Pastoral) - by Ludwig V. Beethoven. The programmatic aspect of this symphony invites the listener to respond to the musical imitation of nature.

Appalachian Spring - a ballet by Aaron Copland scored originally for small pit orchestra but became a major orchestral suite expanding both the musical content and the size of the orchestra for the addition of more color. It was composed for the Martha Graham Ballet Company.

Carl Seale is a retired professor of music residing in McAllen.

VSO Director Emeritus, Dr. Carl Seale, will be honored by the Valley Symphony Orchestra at a special "Red Bow Concerto" performance on April 30 at Quinta Mazatlan. For more information contact the Valley Symphony Orchestra at (956) 661-1615

Photos: *Empress Leilia* butterfly, *Painted Bunting*, and *Pink-Dragonfly* by James Nabours
Birds on a Wire by Seth Patterson

PUBLIC ART

by Linda Lewis

Have you seen the new sculpture on Main St. in McAllen? I was curious about how this particular sculpture found a home there, so I did a little investigating to find out.

First, I discovered the sculpture is “public art.” This simply means that it is placed in a public area that is accessible to everyone. It can be publically or privately owned. Then I found out that the Public Art Committee (PAC) commissions artists to make public art. The PAC was mandated by the City of McAllen to help fulfill its number one goal of attracting a “creative class” of people to McAllen. This group is identified as “the number one sector for new business start ups and economic innovation.” Studies have shown that they are attracted to cities where they can find a broad range of cultural experience. For example, the kind of experience that Artwalk provides.

The city had purchased art before, but it determined that it needed input from the arts community and a formal selection process. Together, the City Commissioners and the McAllen Chamber of Commerce appointed people from the community to be on the board of this new committee. Keith Arney, who is the Lead Art Teacher at the McAllen ISD, was appointed Chair. The committee’s initial budget was \$25,000. This amount was derived from hotel occupancy taxes that are specifically earmarked for the arts and citywide improvement projects. The city then asked the McAllen Chamber of Commerce to assist the PAC in coordinating its activities. According to Arney, their assistance has been invaluable.

Top: *Jackrabbit* by Nancy Moyer and Douglas Clark (view of the artwork in progress)

Middle: Maquette of *The Three Graces* by Mick Reber

Bottom: *Historical Mural* by Joe Taylor (view of a finished piece of the artwork)





Left:
*The Three Graces:
Faith, Hope &
Charity*
by Mick Reber
Installed on Main St.
near Hackberry.



Right:
Irrigation Worker
by Douglas Clark
Installed on No-
lana Ave. at N. 25th
Lane.

The PAC was officially formed in November of 2008 and they held their first meeting in December. They developed an application procedure and invited artists to apply. Three projects were selected:

1. *Jackrabbit*, a steel sculpture by Nancy Moyer and Douglas Clark
2. *Irrigation Worker*, a bronze sculpture by Douglas Clark
3. *Historical Mural*, graphite pencil drawings, by Joe Taylor

Of the above three, the *Irrigation Worker* by Douglas Clark has been permanently installed at Nolana and 25th. *Jackrabbit* is very close to completion, as is the mural.

The sculpture on Main St. was installed on September 16, 2010. However, this sculpture was commissioned by the city before the PAC was formed. Initially, the city planned to install the sculpture in the center of a traffic roundabout, but later placed it in the Arts District upon the recommendation of the PAC.

The Three Graces: Faith, Hope and Charity

An interview with artist Mick Reber



AE: What is the concept behind your sculpture?

MR: The concept of *The Three Graces* is based on the traditional meaning of faith, hope and charity. While these values speak for themselves, my contemporary interpretation allows for a more creative interaction with the viewer. The inter-play of the

positive and negative shapes within the sculpture, both repeat and change as one drives by, or walks around the piece, adding an interesting aesthetic element. *The Three Graces* balance a sphere at the top. Throughout history, the sphere has been used to represent many positive things. I use the sphere to represent unity among people. The concept and values inherent in the *Three Graces: Faith, Hope and Charity*, and the abstract nature of the sculpture itself, will allow it to remain vital and timeless to any and all who view it.

AE: What artists inspire you?

MR: As a classically trained artist holding a Master of Fine Arts and the lifetime distinction of Professor

Emeritus, with some 25 years studying in America and abroad as well as teaching art on the university level, influence by others artists has come and gone. I find, in recent years, that the origin of my paintings, sculpture and drawings come more from universal concepts surrounding political and social influences, than from any individual artists.

AE: What is the process for creating such a large work of art?

MR: Once I was awarded the commission, I began the process of scaling up my drawings to what would become the final 12 foot version. Design considerations were given to possible wind and erosion conditions inherent to the Rio Grande Valley. A highly permanent and non-corrosive core-ten steel was used in the construction. Upon completion, I gave the 1 inch thick steel a patina (surface coloration) with a chemical to give the rich appearance of aged metal.

AE: How long did the project take from start to finish?

MR: The 29 inch high steel maquette was presented to the Public Art Committee on August 5th, 2009 and the completed full-size sculpture was erected on site September 9, 2010.

AE: Why is public art important?

MR: I feel public art engages people in a variety of positive ways. As one drives or walks by a public work of art, he or she is invited to think and reflect. Each of us is invited to enter into a place of aesthetic awareness that might not have otherwise been reached.

AE: How does it feel to have your own artwork in public spaces?

MR: I am reminded of what I said in the 1983 PBS documentary titled “Mick Reber Wild Bill,” concerning my outdoor art. “Going back to a piece of my public work is like seeing an old friend who has aged slightly and seems to look better than when you saw them last.”

www.mickreber.com

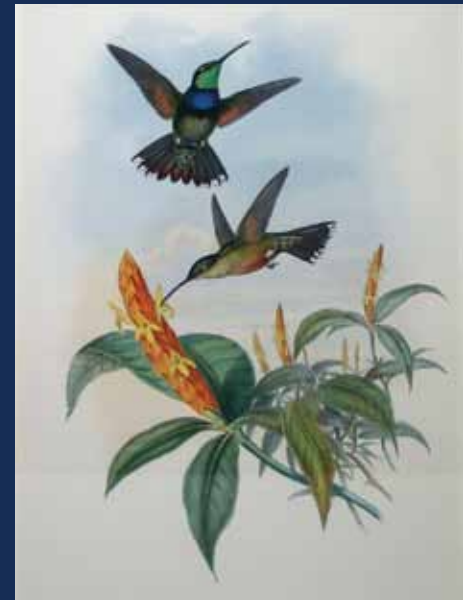


In his famous essay on nature, Ralph Waldo Emerson stated that the common link between all forms of nature is beauty. He suggests that the artist seeks “to concentrate this radiance of the world on one point . . . to satisfy the love of beauty which stimulates him to produce.” The artists who created these artworks are giving a voice to their own unique relationship with nature. Cliff Cavin’s oil paintings are a tribute to the beauty of a spring landscape in Texas. English artist and ornithologist John Gould had a passion for studying and documenting birds. In his watercolor, Daniel Adams shows us a touching family scene and highlights each bird’s uniqueness. In her allegorical painting, Berry Fritz represents man’s attempt to control nature. A man-made bowl contains some of the errant berries while they continue to drop and fall haphazardly around it. Thomas Murray has created an abstract representation of nature inspired by the Fibonacci sequence of numbers (0,1,1,2,3,5,8,13, etc). These numbers correlate to the number of petals on some flowers, unfurling ferns, and other plants. With this small sampling of art, we can visual Emerson’s statement that “The beauty of nature reforms itself in the mind, and not for barren contemplation, but for new creation.”

Nature in Art

Left: Cliff Cavin
Bluebonnet Valley
oil on canvas
Right:

John Gould
Sternoclyta Cyanepectus
Hand-colored lithograph.
c. 1850-1880. Collection of IMAS





Clockwise:
Daniel Adams
Scissortail
watercolor

Berry Fritz
Chaos and Containment
oil on canvas

Thomas Murray
Fibonacci-study
oil on canvas

Art in Nature

A survey of public art in McAllen reveals that it is primarily commemorative. Statues and monuments pay homage to the firemen, police officers and soldiers who protect our families. They reflect deeply felt emotion and reveal the heart of our value system. Public art uplifts and elevates our community. It gives the community a voice and an identify, and it adds meaning and importance to our lives.

Fireman by Douglas Clark
201 N. 21st St. & Beech

Ascension by Brian Wedgworth
Main St. & Maple Ave.

Wave by Douglas Clark
Veteran's War Memorial





Pusan Breakout by Douglas Clark
 Veteran's War Memorial
 29th St. & Galveston St.



Mustang by Douglas Clark & Rena Roberts' art class
 McAllen Memorial High School
 101 E. Hackberry & 2nd Ave.

Starry Starry Valley by Rena Roberts
 Hackberry & 2nd Ave.

Police Memorial by Douglas Clark
 1601 N. Bicentennial Blvd. & Pecan



IMAS Outdoors

A survey of art on the grounds of the International Museum of Art and Science



Left: *Dactyl* by Stuart Kraft, 1983

Top: *Sun Mosaic* by Trish Motheral, c. 2002

Bottom: *Rioscape Mosaics*, 2000. Designed by Painted Universe. Lead artist: Trish Motheral



Clockwise:
Olmec Head #8, Replica. c. 2009
Texas Stele Ruin by Jesus Moroles, 1997
Mother with Child by Brian Wedgworth, 2005
La Fuerza by Victor Salmones, 1977.



Green Living

The McAllen Chamber of Commerce, in conjunction with the Rio Grande Valley International Poetry Festival, the Valley Land Fund and the McAllen Arts Council's *Art E* magazine, held a poetry contest as part of its annual Green Living Festival.

Entrants were invited to write a poem inspired by one of the award winning photos from the 2008 Valley Land Fund Contest. Winners were selected by Daniel Garcia Ordaz, one of the founders of the Rio Grande Valley International Poetry Festival.

Prizes were awarded on Oct. 9, 2010 to Shirley Rickett, Nancy Cosby, and Sarai Garcia. Honorable Mentions were awarded to Julieta Corpus and Radica Sotello.

Poetry Contest

1st Place

Shirley Rickett

Water and Light

Coins of light
 birthed by water

arrange a mirage
 of double exposure.

A single strand
 of water grass

curves to suggest
 the Tao Way.

Green stalks linger
 in the background.

A moment is saved
 in knowledge.

Untitled waterscape
2008 Valley Land Fund Contest
Photographer: Ruth Hoyt
Landowner: Guerra Brothers



2nd Place Nancy Cosby

The Doe

Silently pacing through the brush,
the whitetail pauses before leaving cover.
Long tapered ears flick forward, back,
large dark eyes watch for danger.
Caution is her best protection
as she moves warily onto the muddy bank,
dainty hoof prints recording her passage.

A panoramic look, nose lifted to test the breeze,
does she dare lower her head to drink?
No sound but the chortle of doves,
and morning's heat now drives her choice.

One last scan of her surroundings
and gracefully, gratefully,
she steps into the shallow pond.

An armadillo shares her moment,
lumbering through the scat of coyotes.
Distantly, wild hogs squeal and snort
as they compete for breakfast roots.
The doe's tail, ever a beacon, snaps upward
at the sound of tires crunching on caliche,
an engine coughing to a higher gear.

The deer leaps from the water,
bounding with heart-pumping speed,
crashing through the spiny yaupon,
ducking mesquite limbs, she's frantic to escape.
Over the fence, and she begins to slow, winded now;
her senses report that she has outrun the threat,
while instinct cautions that safety is temporary.



Whitetail Deer
2008 Valley Land Fund Contest
Photographers: Beto Gutierrez &
Randall Ennis
Landowner: San Pedro Ranch/
Danny & Baldo Vela

3rd Place

Saraí García

Genesis

A herpetological experience

It must be early spring

He used his tongue to sense pheromones

If he does this right, in thirty days

She will lay eight to ten oblong eggs.

A romantic interpretation

And so the dance begins

A curl and slither

Two snakes wrapped together

With no distinction where her

Scales begin and his end

Their patchnoses pointed to the heavens

She prays for forgiveness

As carnal needs drag along the dry

South Texas dirt.

The poetic reason

And the Lord said unto the serpent

“thou art cursed...

Upon thy belly shalt thou go,

And dust shalt thou eat

All the days of thy life.”



Texas Patchnose Snake

2008 Valley Land Fund Contest

Photographer: Marsha Ralston

Landowner: Allen & Kellie Williams of Williams Wildscapes

By Patrick A. Garcia

It's getting dark outside. A group of uncomfortable teenagers in striped t-shirts and pastel wayfarers is standing at the foot of a stage, staring at a man with a silvered beard. He is on stage left and is using a violin staff to slowly rub out a smoky, reverb soaked minor chord across his arch top guitar. The man is Omar Rodriguez, the vocalist and guitarist for Japanese to English, a fresh, yet musically mature quintet of McAllen based natives. His band is performing at what they will later go on to describe as their 'worst show ever' that took place at Ambiente, an outdoor music venue, this past March.

But despite the band's thoughts on its performance and the tough crowd, readers may rest assured that the crowd's perplexity may be justified by explaining the context in which the band was performing. That evening they were the only band on that fateful show's entire 15+ line up that wasn't presenting the crowd with a springy, clap your hands say 'yeah, this band is neat / poppy' aesthetic. What Japanese to English presented was a darker, more disciplined stylistic contrast: clouds of reverb heavy vocals, shimmering gui-

JAPANESE TO ENGLISH

tars, and waves of synth hovered above angular, tempo fluctuating drum work deceptively disguised as calm paced rhythms. And they've only gotten better.

Since the aforementioned performance, Japanese to English has grown. It has found a solid line up that has grown comfortable with its darker, more complex presentation of its swelling / shoe gaze / indie rock aesthetic and plays shows to a steadily growing fan-base. Fans of listening to music while taking long drives at night / good music in general may find a brighter day in their music and live presentation if they are willing to seek it out, which they can do by going here:

Japanesetoenglishtheband.blogspot.com

Please check out what the band is up to, find visuals, songs, and tour info on this site. Thanks for your time.

Band Members:

Omar Rodriguez: vocals / guitar

Joseph Lopez: bass

Frances Wells: drums / synth

Andrielle Figueroa: keys / vocals

Javier Guerra: guitar

Photo:

©2010 Rosalinda Martinez



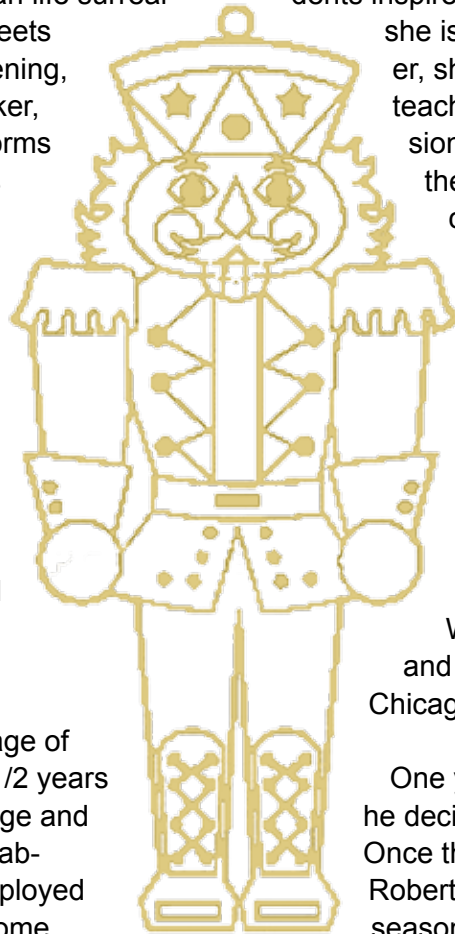
Nutcracker Ballet

By Linda Lewis

What do little girls dream of? One little girl's dream came to life in the Nutcracker Ballet this past holiday season. The excitement and drama of a holiday party in her home becomes a larger than life surreal landscape of animated toys and sweets in her dreams. Previously in the evening, the girl's treasured gift, the Nutcracker, was broken. In her dream, he transforms into a handsome prince who whisks her off to his castle in the Land of Sweets. Having ruled during his absence, the Sugar Plum Fairy celebrates his return with a buffet of sweets from around the world. Dancers representing Spanish chocolate, Danish marzipan and Russian candy canes perform. The beautiful Sugar Plum Fairy (danced by Audrey Folk) and her gallant Cavalier (danced by Michael Rodriguez) perform the final dance, a pas de deux.

Audrey Folk left the valley at the age of 15 to study dance. She returned 8 1/2 years later to share the wealth of knowledge and experience she attained during her absence. Recently, Deborah Case employed her to teach dance. Folk has now come

full circle, returning to the studio where she studied dance from the age of eight to fifteen. Folk's primary goal has been to teach dance. She says her students inspire and invigorate her. Consequently, she is never tired after teaching. However, she says that one important aspect of teaching is keeping current as a professional dancer. She hopes that one day there will be a professional dance company in McAllen.



Michael Rodriguez began his training with Deborah Case at the age of three. Case brought professional dancers to the valley for summer workshops giving him the opportunity to work with Galina Mezentseva of the Kirov Ballet, Alex Ossadnik of the Ballet Theatre de Bordeaux, Michael and Olga Wise of the Moscow Classical Ballet, and dancers from the Joffrey Ballet of Chicago.

One year after completing high school he decided to move to Charleston, SC. Once there, he landed a position with the Robert Ivey Ballet and has completed two seasons there. Rodriguez has returned to

Audrey Folk

Michael Rodríguez



Photo: Jim Kryzak

the valley every year since his departure to perform The Nutcracker for the Deborah Case Academy as a guest artist and soloist.

When Rodríguez needs a bit of inspiration, he likes to watch videos of young Russian dancers on the

internet. He says they are extraordinarily hard workers. When he is not performing, rehearsing, or taking ballet classes himself, he teaches dance classes in and around the Charleston area.

Deborah Case Dance Academy
www.dcca.com

Nancy



The Empirical Face



The Commander



The Facilitator

Isomeric Bicameral

David



The Empirical Face



The Commander



The Facilitator

The Bicameral Face

A Conceptual Theory through Digital Photographs

November 20, 2010 – April 3, 2011
Cardenas Gallery
International Museum of Art & Science

By Michelle Rowe

“We are all aware of the asymmetry of the human face, but what causes it?” This simple yet intriguing question is the premise of artist Nancy Moyer’s photography exhibition, *The Bicameral Face*.

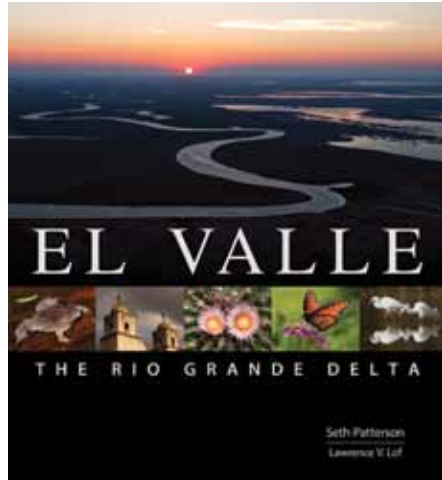
Inspired by Julian Jaynes’ theory of the bicameral mind, Moyer has created a series of portraits which explore both left and right side brain functions and their unique connection to facial symmetry. Moyer presents three photographic portraits of 14 individuals. One of the three photos is the original, which Moyer refers to as the empirical face. The other two photos are digital manipulations of the original. One is the mirror image of the left side of the face (the facilitator), and the other is the mirror image of the right side of the face (the commander).

The results are stunning. Essentially, Moyer’s brilliant exploration is a visual representation of an individual’s thought processes and decision-making patterns. “They [the individuals] routinely use both intuitive and logical information, and are constantly determining which mental persona will make the final decision. Their faces project the two distinct personas,” Moyer explains. The distinct difference between the two halves becomes evident in the manipulated photos. Moyer believes that drastic differences between the original and the manipulations indicate greater inner conflict in the individual.

Nancy Moyer
Top: Nancy
Bottom: David
Ink Jet Print, Wood,
Plexiglas
2008

“With my Bicameral Faces, I have created a series of portraits that I believe to more accurately depict the essence of each individual than would the traditional single-image portrait,” says the artist.

www.imasonline.org



www.riograndebook.com



www.jamesnabours.com



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