

# The Modesto Bee



Ferreri's 'The Visiting Artist Has Second Thoughts About the Lampshade Idea'

## Nine fresh directions drawn out

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Nine artists, nine distinct styles, media that range from pale graphite to vivid oil pastels, imagery that suggests more than meets the eye.

All are in "Drawing Directions," the latest in a series of amazingly successful shows in the Modesto Junior College's art gallery.

Like most of the others, it was curated by gallery director Robin Bernstein, working from submissions by far more artists than the gallery could accommodate. In this case,

there were close to 50 entrants.

The nine selected have two things in common. The first is obvious: All treat drawing as an end in itself, not a preparatory process.

The second is subtler. "Each of the artists' works is either spiritual or psychological or emotional in theme," she says. Most are dominated by images we can recognize — rooms, cars, mountains, faces — but it is subtext that shapes their fascination.

"It's not necessarily real space or real events," Bernstein says. "There are dreams and nightmares and stories."

Juxtaposing densely applied charcoals with untouched spaces that appear blinding in their whiteness, A. Eilene Houston-Carver creates interiors suffused by a sense of emptiness and desertion. Cheryl O'Neill surrounds a sculptural installation — the frame-work of a burned house — with three panels covered with texts of contrasting tone: coldly analytical descriptions of cosmic mechanics meshing with personal anecdotes and

poetic reflections.

Lou Ferreri fills large panels with faces and figures that are dynamic, surreal, disturbing. Katherine McKay weaves the thread-thin lines of colored pencils into desert tapestries that are at once seductive and forbidding.

Autos traveling in darkness provide the devices by which two artists, Lauren Alwan and L. G. Williams, explore varying shades of loneliness. And the others — Frank Pietronigro, Glenn Hirsch and Daniel Mead — are comparably distinctive in diverse explorations and impressive in technical prowess.

To a viewer who is usually turned off by group shows, as I am, "Drawing Directions" is a refreshing exception. It's filled with fine work that commands long and thoughtful examination.

"Drawing Directions" runs through Oct. 9. The gallery, near College and Stoddard avenues, is open 1 to 8 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, 1 to 5 p.m. Fridays, 1 to 4 p.m. Saturdays.

MODESTO BEE  
SUNDAY 9/27/72