

Artists explore dynamics between art and global communication

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Combining primordial, traditional and modern forms of communication, Promega's Premier Exhibit, *Art as Communication*, features artists from around the world who attempt to explore the complicated dynamics between art and global communication.

Representing the abstract concepts of culture and personality through the tangible mediums of bark, textiles, televisions and lithographic devices, four talented artists utilize a broad range of tools to convey their own personal, cultural and scientific beliefs.

Both riveting and turbulent, Lilian Nabalime's root-derived sculpture evinces a complex duality of mutual strength and vulnerability drawn from the mother-child bond. Through her sculptural forms, Nabalime pays tribute to the female gender and its struggle for recognition and power within the African culture. Aside from sculpture, Nabalime's most compelling work is an intriguing applique aptly named "Man." In this abstraction, time transcends the corporeal human form as the rope-like beard depicts the wisdom and experience of an old man at the same time that the open eye and mouth portray the surprise and expectancy of a young boy.

A widely known artist in Africa, Nabalime currently runs the Sculpture Department of Industrial and Fine Art at Makerere University in Uganda.

In contrast, Ray Martin's work with stone lithography and collage culminates in his "Stone, Paper, Scissors" series, suitably named considering that stone and paper are the mediums through which he conveys his art. The title page of his collection (and his personal favorite) combines snatches of his own poetry with pictorial representations of a hand clenched in a fist (representing the rock), the palm of a hand (the paper) and two fingers projecting outwards (the scissors) to evoke both personal nostalgia and memories of the childhood game.

Martin is Chicago's premiere printmaker and the creator of several artists books.

By far the most consciously metaphorical artist of the group, Paul Nitsche's "Two Views of a Girlchild, Aged 10 Years" portrays the aesthetic nature of time and its relationship to the human form. The sensual girlchild clad in antiquated 18th century attire wears the same smoothly chiseled face, but without attire over two centuries later,

as she gazes her way into the present. Here, time can be viewed as twofold: part of time moves forward as the child's dress changes, yet time simultaneously remains the same, as the lack of aging from one face to the next suggests.

"This work depicts time revealed in a sequence, which can be seen as the progression of humanity," Nitsche said.

The figure's doll-like face and haunting eyes impart a timelessness to the picture that renders it not of this world. Nitsche hopes that his works provoke something quieter, perhaps a mood or a mystery.

Nitsche lives in Ridgeway,



Submitted photo

Paul Nitsche's "Two Views of a Girlchild, Aged 10 Years" is part of the *Art as Communication* exhibit which opened recently at Promega Gallery and Biopharmaceutical Technology Center.

Wisconsin and holds a bachelor's degree from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Lending a comedic flair to the mix, Joan Rabascall's colorful photographs of plastic toy television sets reflect his diverse and ubiquitous interests. Television sets containing subjects such as Barbie, Elvis and the Mona Lisa came from a collection gathered from around the world. This broad range of TV's comment on the diversity of the 20th century, Rabascall said. Yet the motionless pictures comprised of frozen images within a screen seem to parody modern communication as his static photographs present a stark contrast to the rapid pace and flux exhibited by modern communicative devices. Rabascall's overall message seems to say: "Enjoy! Don't take life too seriously."

Rabascall practices this montra in his native homeland of Italy. He studied at the Academy of Decorative Arts in Barcelona.

The *Art as Communication* exhibit opened Sept. 11 and will run until Nov. 25 at the Promega Gallery and Biopharmaceutical Technology Center, 5445 East Cheryl Parkway. The exhibit is open daily from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. weekdays, or by appointment.