

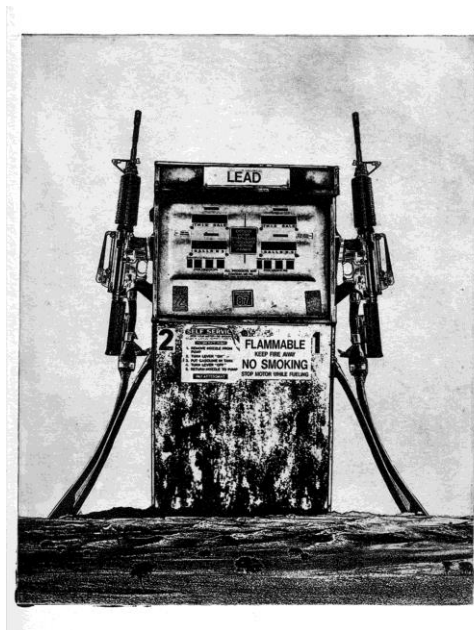
On View | 'War is Always With Us'



"Hospital Hallways," David Byrd, 1992. Oil on canvas



Patient Pondering, David Byrd, 1992. Oil on canvas



"Lead" by Shaun Ganther



"Copper" by Shaun Ganther

Robyn Norton | Wisconsin State Journal Sep 13, 2015

The Stream gallery and atrium at Edgewood College hosts "War is Always With Us," an art exhibit that focuses on the after effects of war and the efforts of current veterans to reach out to their peers through art.

Showcased in the gallery is a collection of oil paintings, "David Byrd: Paintings from Montrose VA Hospital." Byrd, a military veteran himself, was a night orderly on a psychiatric ward at the Veterans Administration Medical Hospital in Montrose, New York. Over 30 years of working with psychiatric patients (whose trauma

resulted from World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War) he observed their individual behaviors, general routines and distinctive personalities.

Byrd explored the isolation and desperation of mental illness through his sketching and paintings. His careful compositions reflect the plight with much empathy and understanding.

Although he produced many pieces of artwork on assorted subjects — not only paintings, but wood sculptures from combining found objects or large wood blocks carved into life-sized figures — he rarely showed them to anyone.

Byrd's first exhibit was after a chance meeting with an artist neighbor; he was 87 years old. Just days before that show opened on April 4, 2013, he was diagnosed with advanced lung cancer. The show closed on May 18, 2013. Byrd died May 30, 2013.

Displayed in the atrium are paintings and prints by Shawn Ganther and prints from Yvette Pino's Veteran Print Project.

An Air Force veteran, Ganther served in Iraq and Afghanistan. He graduated UW-Stevens Point in 2012 with a bachelor's degree in media production and studio art. He advocates art therapy and self-expression as a way to treat post-traumatic stress disorder.

Pino, an Army veteran, served in Iraq, also. She graduated UW-Madison in 2011 with a bachelor's of fine art degree in printmaking. In May 2010, Pino began the Veteran Print Project with the intent of "bringing veterans and artists together to express the historical experiences of veterans through the traditional methods of fine art print, opening an ongoing dialogue between these two groups."

Veteran Print Project artists include Grace Balleg, Bethany Berres, Mark Brueggeman, Kendra Eckert, Tarin Erickson, Ganther, Hannah Herbert, Kris Hess, Adam Hintze, Emily Kuchenbecker, Jess Luer, Brooke Newman, Megan Pollack, Lily Rawson, Amanda Shields, Emily Sikora, Jake Szeligowski, Lanea Zagrzebski and Tim Zeszutek. After listening to a veteran's oral history, they created an art print as a visual representation.

— *Robyn Norton*