

'Art All Over' event shares the wealth

By ALAN BOSTICK
Staff Writer

The visual arts in Nashville will be noticeably more visible Friday through next Sunday thanks to the absurdly simple but ingenious "Art All Over" event.

The brainchild of Cheekwood curator Christine Kreyling, this series of five art openings over three days offers the mobile arts enthusiast a panoramic view of contemporary trends and strategies.

On board are Cheekwood's Museum of Art and Botanic Hall, Vanderbilt's Fine Arts Gallery and Sarratt Gallery, Cumberland Gallery and the Zeitgeist Gallery — a veritable checklist of the most forward-looking venues in town.

Terri Smith, curatorial assistant at Cheekwood, explained that "Art All Over" is basically a bonanza of back-to-back opening receptions: "We just started calling everyone and they got excited about pooling our resources," said Smith, who's coordinating the event with JoEl Levy Logiudice of Vanderbilt's Sarratt Gallery.

Said Logiudice: "We wanted to make the point that contemporary art isn't just happening at one site — it's being showcased all over the city. With all the emphasis on a contemporary arts center here, we almost forget we have a number of current venues that are and have been featuring this art."

As to what links the participants, Smith said each regularly exhibits ground-breaking artists, both local and regional, working out contemporary problems, both in the realm of art and in the world around us.

On view will be paintings, mixed media work, photography, drawings, even fine crafts.

What Logiudice terms the "anchor" of the weekend is Saturday's opening of the 1995 Cheekwood National Contemporary Painting Competition, an annual event now in its fifth installment.

About 2,000 slides by 1,000 artists were entered this year, only to be narrowed to 31 works by jurors Robert Ryman, an internationally-known New York minimalist artist, and Inge-Lise Eckmann, deputy director of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Here are my notes from previewing the finalists last week:

First there was Alexander Stolin's colorful canvas *Mozart*, reproduced here. Combining the delicacy of old etchings with brilliant color reminiscent of Andy Warhol, Stolin has crafted here an engaging image of an elegant figure seated near a piano. Clever details abound — his very silhouette is repeated in the wallpaper pattern and his dainty fingers, rather than dancing across a keyboard, are apparently scooping dog food for an anxious pet at his feet. There are problems of perspective — the legs and feet, though in the foreground, are strangely petite — but the overwhelming blasts of purple and yellow tend to obscure such quibbles.

Also of note were Charles Ritchie's two watercolors, *Night Yard* and *Security Lights*. These studies in light and shadow feature a haunting illumination that only partially succeeds in penetrating the



This by Alexander Stolin is one of 31 finalists at Cheekwood's annual competition.

darkness. The source of light is so exquisitely delicate that it appears constantly on the verge of being extinguished, lending the work a disturbing tension.

Equally enticing but entirely different is Erling Sjøvold's oil, *Diary*. Oddly enough, this view of a garbage dump has much in common with the explosive canvases of the Italian Mannerists, particularly Rosso Fiorentino, who created the impression of suppressed energy in

the most inanimate objects.

Other shows next weekend include contemporary still lifes at Cumberland; drawings by Nashville's Sue Mulcahy and work by Richard Painter at Zeitgeist; and photography and mixed media works by prize-winning Vanderbilt art students at that school's two galleries.

Call the individual venues for specifics on time and place. ■

1995 Cheekwood National Contemporary Painting Competition

Inge-Lise Eckmann is the Deputy Director of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, where she oversees art installation and the operations of numerous departments, including painting and sculpture, photography and media arts. Eckmann began her career with a student fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. Her education includes a B.A. in Visual Arts from Bennington College and an M.A. in art conservation from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Jurors

Robert Ryman, one of the most significant American abstract artists of his generation, began showing in New York in the 1960s. His so-called "white" paintings, in their reductive treatment of form and color, are considered one of the high points of the minimalist movement. Ryman, however, sees himself as a "realist" in that his art has its own reality and does not try to imitate something that already exists. Ryman was recently honored with major retrospective showings at the Tate Gallery in London (1993) and The Museum of Modern Art in New York (1993-94).

Drawings included in the Cheekwood exhibition, 16 October to 30 December 1995



Security Lights, 1992-93, watercolor, graphite, pen and ink, and charcoal, 18 x 28 3/4"



Night Yard, 1990-95, watercolor, graphite, pen and ink, and conte crayon, 17 1/8 x 22 1/4"