

Found objects give HCC artists inspiration

A few years ago, as a visual arts student at Holyoke Community College, Adam Mulcahy often spent time between classes walking the abandoned trolley tracks that run through the woods behind campus. These treks were about more than fresh air and exercise. Mulcahy was searching for supplies.

"As a lifelong Holyoke resident and history fanatic, I am fascinated by the immediate area surrounding the HCC campus," said Mulcahy, who earned his associate's degree from HCC in 2015 and a bachelor's degree in fine art from Westfield State. "My art has always showcased that love of all things old and forgotten. Walking in the woods on a hunt for art supplies is a new adventure every time."

Mulcahy is one of three local artists whose sculpture is featured in a new exhibit at HCC's Taber Art Gallery called "Found" that opens Monday, Dec. 2, and runs through Thursday, Dec. 19. The others are Nan Fleming of Williamsburg and Mark Brown of Easthampton.

"All three are artists whose work I've been interested in for years," said Taber director Amy Johnquest. "What they all have in common is that their work is made from objects that might be headed for the trash but that they've repurposed into artistic form."

For instance, some of Mulcahy's contributions were constructed from materials he found in a nearby 19th century cider mill. His shadow box assemblages contain objects from Mountain Park, the former amusement park on Mount Tom that he visited as a child.

"I am fascinated by the histories of the individual parts and how they fit together," he said in his artist's statement. "Sometimes I feel as though I am merely along for the ride as the pieces dictate where they want to be."

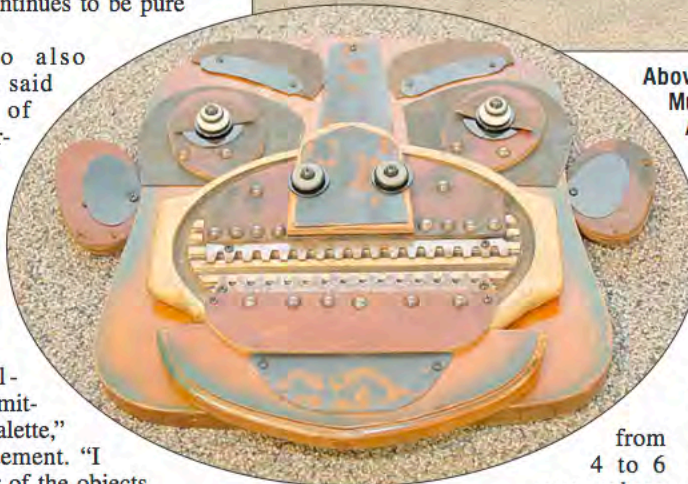
In 1992, Fleming took a welding class at the University of Massachusetts and that, she says, is when she discovered metal as an art form.

"Always a hoarder of the discarded and used, I was drawn to the shapes and patinas of old rusty bits and pieces more than the clean shiny sheets of new metal available in the foundry," Fleming said in her artist's statement. "Manipulating a shape with heat continues to be pure magic for me."

Brown, who also attended UMass, said his current art of "quirky and humorous" characters is inspired by 20th century master Paul Klee and from traditional ethnographic artwork, especially African masks.

"These collaged pieces are limited in their color palette," he said in his statement. "I allow the character of the objects to dominate the surfaces and the integration of disparate materials is subtle and effective."

There will be a closing reception with the artists on Thursday, Dec. 19,



Above, two pieces by Holyoke artist Adam Mulcahy, on display next month in HCC's Taber Art Gallery, include "Segue into Modern Man" (2019), left, and "Future Relic #149" (2017). Inset, "The Big Grin," by Easthampton artist Mark Brown (2019), is also part of the Taber Art Gallery exhibit Dec. 2-19.

Submitted photos

the planet," Johnquest said. "Recycle. Reuse."

The Taber Art Gallery at HCC is open Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., during regular school sessions. It is free and open to the public and located through the HCC Campus Library lobby on the second floor of the HCC Donahue Building, 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke.

For more information, contact Amy Johnquest, director of the Taber Art Gallery, at 413-552-2614.

from 4 to 6 p.m., where their art will be available for purchase.

"It's nice for the holidays and a good way to support local artists whose work with found objects is also good for