

North shore artists Mattox, Koon have displays coming up
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One of St. Tammany's interesting and well known artists, Bernard Mattox, spends most of his time in his north shore studio in Covington. There is much to be said of the mystique of an artist, and certainly in the case of Mattox, there is substance as well. His visibility in the cultural community for many years made more obvious his gradual retreat from the local scene in order to concentrate more fully on the demands of his painting and sculpture.

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Working in both two and three dimensions, Mattox has been recognized for his mixed media approach to art making as well his provocative themes. His latest collection, the Wimme-Beelden Series, is an illusive title, but it represents a concession on the part of this artist, who for many years preferred to leave his work untitled.

A short trip over the Causeway to Magazine and Napoleon affirms Mattox's presence in the region and his connection to his audience. Characteristic of his style, many forms and figures populate rather than move across the picture plane. The term Wimme-Beelden, loosely defined by gallery director Carol Robinson, references a wild image or picture. Though Mattox's work suggests randomness, closer observation of pattern, repetition, and placement reveals control as the eye seeks the human silhouette among the inanimate arrangements of icons of culture in his painting, some ancient, others new; some invented by the artist, others the product of technology.

Mattox has always appeared to be interested in capturing essences, the unseen nature of things, in spite of presenting us so much to see. The Wimme-Beelden Series is on display at 840 Napoleon Ave, in New Orleans through Feb. 24.

A reception for the artist is scheduled for Feb. 4 from 6-8pm. More information about Bernard Mattox is available by contacting Carol Robinson at 504.895.6130.

Another St. Tammany artist, heading west instead of south this January, is Wes Koon. Travelers interested in the arts in Louisiana will likely end up at the Acadiana Center for the Arts. Once a bank building, this impressive contemporary art center in the heart of downtown Lafayette was completely renovated and expanded into a center for cultural arts. Covington artist Wes Koon recently found himself there, in the vault. An exhibition of glass sculptures by Wes Koon, "Reflections," is featured in this special and aptly named gallery of the ACA through March 1.

Koon is a member of the Louisiana Crafts Guild, an organization of juried Fine Crafts Artisans located throughout the southern region of the United States.

In addition to professional jury requirements and dedication to fine craft, membership is offered to individuals who are active in the arts within their community. Koon certainly has demonstrated his presence in the cultural arts and education of St. Tammany, as an educator, patron, and member/owner of the longtime and greatly missed Fort Isabel Gallery.

From his Pine Koon Studio in the piney woods of Covington, a place that seems to inspire the creativity of several resident artists, Koon creates one-of-a-kind contemporary, laminated, beveled glass sculptures using cold glass techniques. His intricate glass sculptures are highly refractive.

Appealing color variations and brilliant effects of light on geometric surfaces prove popular characteristics of his style as viewers are drawn to explore each piece from within. "Reflections," sculpture by Wes Koon, may be viewed at 101 West Vermilion Street in Lafayette through March 1. For more information about St. Tammany artist Wes Koon, visit www.pinekoonstudio.com.