



Fine Arts Center  
COLORADO SPRINGS

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## Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Bringing It All Back Home: Regional Artists Featured in Fine Arts Center Exhibition**

Colorado Springs, CO (January 12, 2007)... The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center is proud to continue its long tradition of presenting works by artists with ties to our community and the western region of the United States. The exhibition *Spring Forward: Four Colorado Artists*, featuring the art of Daniel Britton, Pard Morrison, Laurel Swab and Rita Zimmerman, opens at the FAC MODERN on January 27 and runs through March 4, 2007.

The exhibition opening celebration is slated for Saturday, January 27 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the FAC MODERN located in Plaza of the Rockies at 121 South Tejon Street. This special evening offers an opportunity for the public to meet the artists and view the exhibition for the first time. The event will feature live music by the Jeff Rinsky Trio, complimentary hors d'oeuvres, cocktails available for purchase in the trendsetting Jazz Bistro, and exhibit-related merchandise on display in the Museum Shop.

Selected to participate in the exhibition by Fine Arts Center President/CEO Dr. Michael De Marsche, the four artists demonstrate not only four talents of uniquely different vision, but present some of the most engaging works found anywhere in contemporary art.

"I chose these artists because all of them possess incomparable command over their chosen medium. But I wanted more. I wanted artists who describe realities laden with mystery—scenes that ask questions about our very existence and how we perceive that

existence. All of these artists achieve this in wildly different ways. But, in essence, they all have one thing in common: they all ask deeply probing questions of the human condition,” comments Dr. De Marsche. “If you’re looking for a central current in the art of today, I believe this is it. Artists—like the rest of us—are taking a closer look at the age in which we live. I’m convinced that all these artists do this, and I think this is one of the most compelling shows we’ve ever presented,” he concludes.

*Spring Forward: Four Colorado Artists* is sponsored by The Gazette, Smokebrush Foundation for the Arts, Total Office Solutions, Inc., Ralph and Jean Peters, and Gary and Anne Bradley. Our grateful acknowledgement to the sponsors of the FAC MODERN: Gay & Lesbian Fund for Colorado, JPMorgan Chase, and Nor’wood Development Group.

**Background information about the artists appears on the next page.**

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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Interviews with the artists, a sneak peek of the exhibition and additional images of artists' work may be arranged by contacting the FAC Public Relations Office at (719) 477-4316.

### **Biographical Synopsis and Artist Statement: Daniel R. Britton**

Daniel Britton is a Professor at the Arizona State University, teaching printmaking and life drawing classes. He grew up in Colorado Springs and returns often. He received his MFA in printmaking from the University of Colorado, Boulder. Dan is recognized across North America and abroad and has exhibited at Bibliotecque National (Paris, France), Haarman and Reimer GmbH (Holtzminden, Germany), Corcoran Museum (Washington, D.C.), Portland Art Museum (Portland, OR), and University of Colorado (Boulder, CO). Dan has been awarded the 2005 Eugene Rogolsky Purchase Award from the National Los Angeles Printmaking Society Exhibition, the Award of Merit from the 4<sup>th</sup> Turner National Print Competition in California, and many other prestigious awards both nationally and internationally. Dan's publications include Contemporary American Printmaking, coverage in Art News and Who's Who various publications.

"My taste in art is a selective recreation of reality. The purpose of which is communicating some meaningful aspect of what it means to be human and how we can perceive reality. I consider myself a traditional artist. My primary initial motivation in creating paintings or prints is a visual interest in the subject, and the light that falls on that subject. Of equal importance is choosing and utilizing the most interesting components of the language of painting and drawing for the subject to have a unique and stimulating visual impact. The structure of my work allows me to use realism as a foundation with elements of abstraction and invention as strong contributors to the finished work. I have little specific interest in narratives or stories. Instead, I want the language of sight and mark making to encourage a sense of visual poetry in the finished work." – DANIEL BRITTON, 2006

### **Biographical Synopsis and Artist Statement: Pard Morrison**

Pard Morrison was born and raised in Colorado Springs. He received a BFA with a concentration in sculpture from Colorado State University. His style is best described as contemporary minimalism. Morrison has said his work is expressive of a hypothetical conversation between Donald Judd and Agnes Martin, two celebrated minimalists. Blending rectilinear forms and decorative grids, he has created a wide variety of new, refined expressions within a limited framework. Pard is recognized nationally and has exhibited at LewAllen Contemporary (Santa Fe, NM), RULE Modern and Contemporary, Denver Museum of Contemporary Art (Denver, CO) and various Arthur Roger Galleries (New Orleans, Miami, Hamptons, and Chicago). Pard's coverage has included National Geographic Traveler, Westword, Rocky Mountain News and the Santa Fean.

"I am interested in the intersection of two basic concepts, the union and juxtaposition of surface and medium, as they refer to the human experience. The medium 'metal' serves as a metaphor for the physicality of the human body. The surface serves as a metaphor for the human spirit. Repetitive geometric shapes based on the grid are the visual foundation, while surface treatment defies this strict containment. This is the human paradox, the intersection between human corporeal, and human transcendent. This unprecedented sculptural work signifies this hybridization." – PARD MORRISON, 2006

### **Biographical Synopsis and Artist Statement: Laurel Swab**

Painter and sculptor Laurel Swab has resided in Colorado Springs for most of her life. Swab graduated with honors and received a BFA in 1991 from the Kansas City Art Institute where she studied sculpture and fiber arts. While primarily recognized as a sculptor, she was inspired to start painting after a trip to Italy in 1997. Her work is expressive, poignant and thought provoking. It addresses issues of confrontation, cultural boundaries and personal evolution. Laurel has exhibited at the Fine Arts Center (Colorado Springs, CO), Sangre de Cristo Arts Center (Pueblo, CO), and William Havu Gallery (Denver, CO), among others. She has been the recipient of numerous awards including the Best Visual Artist by the Pikes Peak Arts Council in 2002.

“I paint to illustrate, to communicate and also to escape. Within this century, life as we know it will drastically change. The world, as we know it, will no longer exist. We have the power to minimize the damage but we have to take action. We must stop being distracted by senseless wars and the pettiness of politics. Our universal psyche and our world are damaged and we need to repair them. I feel this pressure and it frustrates me that we, as a people, still choose to turn a blind eye to the changes that are occurring right in front of us. My work is a reflection of this universal tension, and as a result, the personal tension that I feel. It is also about my desire to encourage awareness and change. I struggle with my own place in the universe, who and what I am and what I can and can’t do. Often the work depicts a single figure because suffering as well as healing is experienced first on a personal level. However, we do not exist only as individuals. It is important to remember our role as part of the whole, and that we share the burden of existence. I am saddened by the fact that we are still driven by greed, lust for power and intolerance. Our greatest enemy is our ignorance. It is difficult and tedious living in a world full of war, and suffering. We are so busy imposing our will on others that we have lost sight of the things that are of universal import. We have to make the decision to change. This happens first on an individual level. We as individuals decide how we are going to live, how we treat each other and this planet. It is easy to feel powerless being only one person, but we as individuals make up a mass of intellect that has the ability to bring about global change. We as individuals decide who we put in positions of power to help us make that change. We don’t have the luxury of time anymore. We have become disconnected from our universe and each other and it may very well be that we have to destroy ourselves before we learn how crucial that connection is.” – LAUREL SWAB, October 2006

### **Biographical Synopsis and Artist Statement: Rita Zimmerman**

Rita Zimmerman has lived and worked in Colorado Springs for 16 years. She received her MFA in painting from the University of Cincinnati. Recognized for her thought provoking personality studies of children, animals and the elderly, Zimmerman’s paintings focus on the “provocative glance” and familiar gesture. She creates colorful, densely painted surfaces, sometimes rubbed to blur easy distinctions. Her masterfully designed works use every inch of surface to achieve emotional, dramatic and often mysterious images. Rita’s work has been exhibited in the United States, France, and Germany. She has been awarded the 2003 Museum Purchase Award from the Fine Arts Center (Colorado Springs, CO) and the prestigious Michael O’Brian Award from the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, NY).

*Beauty and The Island of the Dead*

“Originally I wanted to simply paint beauty. I had a handsome model and a studio full of empty canvases, but every promising attempt at beauty fell into mud. His beauty was elusive. There were many months of ugly painting. And then I was invited to the island of the dead. The island of the dead was discovered by a Swiss artist, Arnold Böcklin in 1880. He painted a series of romantic, exotic and spiritual landscapes that were commissioned by a wealthy and forlorn widow on the theme of her bereavement. I was invited to make a painting inspired by these masterful works and then exhibit with a group of thirty German artists in Berlin who had all worked from the same inspiration. The invitation was irresistible, a dark painting for the city with the dark soul. No real painting came until my own visit to the island. My island of the dead was in Florida. My youthful mother was suddenly dying. There was unrelenting pain and horror for weeks as I traveled back and forth from Florida to Colorado. My painting began to imitate life, it was a macabre reflection, the island was protected by a pack of killer hyenas. I slept among the dying in Hospice only to return to Colorado to add another bloody hyena to the pack. My painting became a reservoir for emotions. The palette chose itself. A month after my mother died the ‘Hyena Pack’ was exhibited in Berlin dripping wet. I returned to my model still searching for the beauty only to find more grief and mourning on the canvas... Then ‘Beauty’ emerged in cadmium orange and red.” – RITA ZIMMERMAN, 2006