

Nicolaysen Art Museum & Discovery Center

The Nicolaysen Art Museum's most recent exhibition, *Structure and Improvisation*, highlights and explores the expanded boundaries of contemporary quilt making. Nancy Crow, Rosalie Dace, Michael James, and Paula Nadelstern are "contemporary masters of the quilt-making medium and have been internationally recognized for their innovation and exceptional artistic merit," said Guest Curator Kenise Barnes.

"The work in *Structure and Improvisation* represents some of the exhilarating ways that the contemporary art quilt movement has flourished," Barnes said. "The quilts in this exhibition exist to be appreciated solely as works of art. ...While they leave their functionality behind, these quilts, and the artists that create them, are greatly influenced by

contemporary society and how we see and process information visually.

"A quilt, like any work of art, can be understood on many levels of visual literacy. The viewer may have emotional identification with a particular color, imagery or texture, be able to identify the representational elements, understand the structural complexities of the composition, or have a visceral reaction to its pure abstract lyricism."

As students have an increasing amount of visual information that they see and must interpret every day, visual literacy skills also become increasingly important. Viewing and analyzing art can play an important role in developing these visual literacy skills. A tour of the galleries at the NIC is a fun and interactive way to strengthen and practice these skills.

Combine a gallery tour with a visit to the Discovery Center and you can add hands-on art activities to the students' experience. Students can create at any of the numerous learning stations, which include exhibition-specific enrichment centers. These exhibition-related centers



"After Nature" by Michael James

give students (and adults) the opportunity to make more profound connections with the artwork they experience in the galleries. All the self-guided activity stations help fulfill state curriculum standards not only in fine arts but also for math, science, social studies and language arts. As the stations are continually changing, we are able to meet a variety of standards throughout the year.

Contact the Education Department at the NIC at 235-5247.

Upcoming Events

March 30 — Annual meeting
April 1—NIC @ Noon
April 22—Sensational Small Works Showcase Exhibition
May 1—NIC @ Noon
May 6—Sensational Small Works Event and Sale
May 20 - Aug. 7—Jamie Burmeister Exhibition
May 20 - Sept. 11—Living History: A Group Exhibition