



Muscatine Art Center
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Melanie Alexander, Director



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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WORK BY CHRISTIANSEN, DEASON TO BE FEATURED

Muscatine Art Center to open exhibitions from artists with Muscatine connections

MUSCATINE, Iowa - Cory Christiansen and John Deason are two artists connected to a small circle of mostly Muscatine residents who gathered to create and discuss art while also engaging in conversations about countless topics. Deason was part of the informal group while Christiansen later developed ties to some of its members.

Both men shared a special bond with Muscatine printmaker Jon Fasanelli-Cawelti, who passed away in 2021 and whose artwork will be exhibited at the Muscatine Art Center starting September 21, 2023.



Cory Christiansen, Dusk, Mixed Media

Christiansen, an orthopedic surgeon pursuing a Studio Arts degree at the University of Iowa, has come to appreciate the fragile and fleeting nature of our existence. His mixed media works are efforts to answer big questions such as how we came about, what our purpose is, and what our history tells us about ourselves and our future.



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Christiansen uses conceptual pieces, historical reference, and aesthetic means in his explorations. The character of his work is continually changing based on his perpetual search for innovative technology, novel techniques, and inspiration from mentors, past and present.

“One of my favorite Jon Fasanelli-Cawelti quotes is, ‘I’ve always loved history. It made perfect sense that I would end up being a dinosaur,’” Christiansen said. “Jon embraced the prehistoric practice of mark making, that basic act of creation, that is innately human and central to personal fulfillment. His enthusiasm, dedication to his art, and indomitable spirit inspired resurrection of my own dinosaur instincts, for which I am eternally grateful.”



John Deason, Discovery Park in Muscatine, Photograph

Deason, a former Muscatine High School teacher who received his Master of Fine Arts degree with an emphasis in photography from the University of Iowa and later taught at Augustana College, has been fascinated by photography for many decades. At the age of seven, following a move to Sioux City, Iowa, Deason became friends with a neighbor boy whose father was a talented photographer named Grant Jensen.

Deason states that Jensen changed his whole life as he became his mentor at an early age.

“He gave me a 35-millimeter camera, and I began taking photos,” Deason said. “I wanted to take serious photos for people to view and discuss. I was very lucky to have this adult friend who would take the time and effort to teach me how to develop film and then print photographs. Years later, he gave me a wooden view camera with bellows, a sharp lens and slide-in film holders.”



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Deason and Christiansen continue their connection to one another and enjoy their memories of countless thought-provoking conversations with Fasanelli-Cawelti. Both men are notable artists who are perpetually grappling with how we see and experience the world around us.

Christiansen's exhibition opens on August 10, 2023 and runs through March 10, 2024. Deason's exhibition is on view from August 17 through October 29, 2023. Both exhibitions will be installed on the second floor of the historic house.

The public is invited to meet both artists and enjoy the company of their supporters, enthusiasts, and fellow artists during the free reception from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 20.

The Muscatine Art Center is located at 1314 Mulberry Avenue in Muscatine, Iowa. Hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Thursday evenings until 7:00 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Admission is free of charge. Donations are appreciated. Visit www.muscatineartcenter.org for more information about programs and events.

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