

'Pandora' opens new world of media for artist duo

By **TIM BROUK**
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Unlike the mythic ancient Greeks, Lorie Amick and Janet Fox Elmore were pleased when they opened their Pandora's box.

Theirs was metaphorical as the two local artists put aside their respective watercolors and clay to open up new worlds of art within them. This new work makes up "Pandora," an exhibit by Amick and Elmore that runs through May 28 at Artists' Own, 518 Main St.

Known for her pottery, Elmore created about a dozen small wooden boxes. Functional and stylish, the pieces are Elmore's first attempts at using wood.

The other side of the show has paper sculptures by Amick. An award-winning painter, Amick used only paper, glue and an X-Acto knife for paper recreations of cartoon characters from vintage Old Maid card games.

"I like the old things," Amick said. "I like that idea of the continuance of things and the transience of people and the things that belong to people that

IF YOU GO

An opening reception for "Pandora" by Lorie Amick and Janet Fox Elmore will run from 7 to 10 p.m. Friday during the Downtown Gallery Walk. The artists will give a talk about the show at 7 p.m. May 19.
Online: www.lorieamick.com

are gone ... There's sort of this connection."

The "Pandora" idea occurred to Amick when she remembered an old toy chest at her grandmother's that she enjoyed rummaging through as a child.

One of her most vivid memories from that chest was the colorful and goofy characters from Old Maid card games. "Tumble Down Tess," "Clancy Clown," "Tooty Tutor" and other alliterative characters stuck with her over the decades.

Thanks to eBay, Amick tracked down those Old Maid cards and several editions from the 1940s to the '60s.

"I'm the biggest buyer of Old Maid cards eBay has ever had. I just bought



Lorie Amick, left, and Janet Fox Elmore collaborated for the new show "Pandora" at Artists' Own gallery in downtown Lafayette. (BY JORDAN KARTHOLL/JOURNAL & COURIER)

three more sets this morning," Amick laughed. "They are fascinating."

Amick used four different weights of locally made Twinrocker paper to create the framed pieces. The more she sculpted them, the more intricate she could work.

One of the artist's favorites, "Arnie Angler," has intricate fishing flies, nets and a pole.

"I had more fun making this silly fishing rod and figuring out how to make the water work," Amick said. "I picked out characters I liked and had fun making."

A few oil paintings featuring the Old Maid cards complement the paper works, and Amick has a display case of all of the old cards that inspired her part of "Pandora."

Elmore's woodwork was aided by her husband, David Elmore. He had the woodworking tools and shop, but Elmore dove in and used her own style when creating the small boxes. Most have a "wave" theme.

"You want these smooth lines to make it work," Elmore said. "This came about during the tsunami (that hit Japan in March)

and started with waves and then others went to things like sea urchins."

Like when she is building a clay work, Elmore said she didn't know where she was going when taking a chunk of wood to a band saw. Some ideas were sketched but she just let things flow naturally.

Some of the wood pieces have clay inlays, and Elmore represented her favorite medium with a few clay, lidded jars.

"When Lorie started talking about Pandora, I thought of how Pandora's box was really a lidded jar, an urn, and so I started looking at covered jars," Elmore explained.

Recent shows in Artists' Own have taken artists out of their comfort zones. "Pandora" is no different. Amick said she will continue working with the Old Maid theme while Elmore had more mixed feelings on the switch in media.

"The wood was interesting. It's less forgiving. If you make a mistake with wood, it's there more than clay," Elmore said. "The part I really didn't like is the sanding. I was sanding and sanding, and I had sawdust in my nose."



Former Miss Ohio Kim Yeager, a ventriloquist, is featured in "Dumbstruck." (PHOTO PROVIDED)

Ventriloquist mom inspires film

By **BOB BLOOM**
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Marlene Cohen is no dummy.

The Indianapolis Public Schools second-grade teacher would use ventriloquism to settle her students when they became too rowdy or to get them engaged in a lesson.

At the wedding of her daughter, Lindsay, Cohen put a sock on her hand and stood up to toast her daughter and new son-in-law, Mark Goffman.

Later, Mark and Lindsay Goffman went with Cohen to Fort Mitchell, Ky., to attend an annual ventriloquism convention — the only one in the world.

Thus was sown the inspiration for "Dumbstruck," an engaging documentary written and directed by Mark Goffman and produced by Lindsay Goffman that looks at the world of ventriloquism.

Lindsay Goffman, who will be returning with her husband to Indianapolis for the film's Friday premiere at the Landmark Keystone Arts theater, recently spoke about the movie and its making.

Goffman said that after attending the convention she and her husband realized that it was a "fascinating world that no one had ever covered before."

She and Mark then decided to make a documentary about it.



Lindsay Goffman is the producer of the documentary "Dumbstruck."

INDY PREMIERE

"Dumbstruck" opens Friday at the Landmark Keystone Arts theater in Indianapolis.

On hand for the premiere will be Mark and Lindsay Goffman as well as Kim Yeager, a former Miss Ohio, who is one of the featured ventriloquists in the film.

A puppet will be given away to an attendee.

The convention's organizers were helpful, allowing them access. The response from those attending also was wonderful, she said.

"Dumbstruck" focuses on five people. Goffman said they wanted their story to look at individuals who had set goals.

One of them, Terry Fator, far exceeded their expectations.

Fator, who had been struggling for years, was a winner on "America's Got Talent." He later signed a \$100 million multiyear contract, the largest in the history of Las Vegas, to headline at the Mirage Casino.

Goffman, a gradu-

ate of Lawrence Central High School and Indiana University, said one of the aims of the film is create "a new appreciation" for ventriloquism.

"We are hoping that people will watch the film and see these performers as normal people and professionals.

"It's harder than being a standup comedian," she said, because the performers have to speak in multiple voices and be funny in all of them.

Plus the ventriloquists also have to make their puppets move. "It is very complicated," Goffman said.

Besides Fator, the movie focuses on Kim, a former Miss Ohio beauty queen looking for her big break; Dan, a successful cruise ship performer whose personal life crashes offshore; Dylan, an introverted 13-year-old; and Wilma, a giant of a woman who has not let her personal problems keep her from spreading joy at senior homes and church events.

The common denominator that links these people is that they "all believe in what they are doing. It is a relatable theme for all artists."

One of the Goffmans' goals is to change people's perceptions of ventriloquists. "They are wonderful, lighthearted, friendly people. They are like a family."

MOM

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Dodds said for a while her mom was a teacher at the school she attended in a suburb outside Philadelphia. "I got to see what she did for a living, and I had a friend whose mom was a teacher at the same school," she said. "We used to play school while both of our moms were actually getting ready for school."

Now that they are both teachers, Dodds looks to her mother as an important resource. She hopes to enhance the legacy her mother leaves behind as Nelson retires this year from teaching.

"I've always looked at her as an excellent teacher," Dodds said. "I'm just so proud of her. So I just hope that I can be the same."

Nelson said she recognized her daughter had the characteristics of a good teacher. "She is very personable," she said. "She really is a good person. But you need more than that to be a teacher. You need to have an interest in learning."

Cassie Paeth and Alexandra Paeth also are following after their mother, Claudia Wearstler Paeth. Although Wearstler Paeth teaches art at Attica High School, her daughters are pursuing it as a serious hobby instead of occupation.

The three recently had pieces shown in the "Art Mix" exhibit at Tippecanoe Arts Federation in Lafayette.

The daughters said they were immersed into their mother's world of art exhibits, gallery walks and artist culture at an early age.

"She's given us a lot of opportunities," said Cassie, who has taken on photography as her chosen art form. "I'm closest to Mom, and seeing her do it, I kind of followed in her footsteps."

Under the tutelage of her mother, Alexan-



Claudia Wearstler Paeth, from left, and her daughters, Cassie and Alexandra, all have paintings on display at Tippecanoe Arts Federation. (BY JORDAN KARTHOLL/JOURNAL & COURIER)



dra grew to appreciate art. But now the college student recently decided to pick up a brush and dabble with painting and mixed media.

"Art doesn't really have boundaries, and Mom kind of showed me that," the 26-year-old said. "There are no real rules to being an artist."

Wearstler Paeth said she thinks her daughters' emulation is "awesome."

"Cassie's photography is really different than a lot of other photographers," she said. "She has an artist's eye for design. The way she looks through the lens is really fine art."

She said Alexandra "has a natural ability" for creating art.

Megan Chapman of Dayton has become a nurse — the same as her mother, Peg Ponto of Fowler.

"I've always seen what she's done," said Chapman, a registered nurse at Indiana University Health Arnett. "She always told me, 'You can do so much in nursing,' and I watched it from the time I was a kid."

Ponto, a registered nurse at St. Elizabeth East, has been a nurse for 31 years. "It just warmed my heart," she said.

"There was so much pride to know that she was going into nursing school."

But the transition into Mom's shoes isn't always

an easy one.

Circle said she did not become serious about gymnastics until after college at Purdue University, where she studied industrial design. She finally realized her heart was in gymnastics during an interview for a position in that field.

"The discipline, the hard work, the work ethic ... what it taught me was just amazing," she said. "What other job can you have your family with you at all times?"

Rau said she did not expect either of her two daughters to pursue her career choices, although they both did. Her oldest daughter, who lives in Florida, recently started teaching dance.

"As they were off to college, they were very adamant that they weren't going to do gymnastics anymore," she said.

But Rau is proud of Circle's decision. "Without her, I don't think that Dance Moves and Gymnastics would have grown to the level that it is now," she said. "She comes up with all of these neat, fun classes for the children."

Working together has only strengthened their mother-daughter bond. "I call her every night even though we're with each other," Circle said. "She's there to just listen, but she's also there to give advice."