

(Neb.)-Art Show At Chadron State College Explores Personal Identity

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 03/11/2014 09:51 AM

Photo: "The Emotional Gynandromorph" is a pressure print and reductive woodcut created by Benjamin D. Rinehart in 2012. This and other related pieces in the "imPRINT" show will be on display in the Chadron State College Memorial Hall Gallery, room 239, March 17th-April 4th. (Photo courtesy CSC)

(CHADRON)-An art show at Chadron State College, featuring images by printmaker and book artist Benjamin D. Rinehart, will be open for viewing in the Memorial Hall Gallery, room 239, beginning next week. The show, entitled "imPRINT," is scheduled to open on Monday, March 17th. Rinehart, who lives in Appleton, Wis., is an associate professor of art at Lawrence University. He has exhibited his work in a variety of one-person and group shows in the U.S. since 1997.

His pieces depict an autobiographical narrative, critiquing relationships between people and personal identity. As a member of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Questioning community, Rinehart uses his personal experience to raise awareness and speak about issues affecting a socially and politically under-represented, if not marginalized, minority.

In his artist's statement, he said, "Each piece is an expression of intimacy and subject to numerous readings beyond that exists as much more than just a platform to speak about my own life. My artwork is designed to communicate and help others by providing a new insight into supposedly universal experiences thus contributing to a wider dialog, and ideally, forming a stronger sense of community and family."

Rinehart believes our ability to embrace differences in others heavily depends on a lifetime of external social and environmental influences. To some extent, seeking approval and acceptance is a shared common experience. "I am intrigued by what happens when comfortable or predictable ideologies are questioned. Conceptually, the subject matter of my work is deliberate in its intention to provoke emotional, intellectual, and often physical response from the viewer," Rinehart said.

The personal memories he incorporates directly relate to family, relationships, children, and parenting. "I attempt to raise questions about love, insecurities, social injustices, and values in contemporary society. I have gained a special perspective into acceptance because of my current family structure. Raising two children with my male counterpart affords me the opportunity to revisit my childhood, acknowledge my evolving identity, and determine my role going forward in society," Rinehart said.

He attempts to direct the viewer's experience with tactile, visual, emotional, and psychological responses. Bitter and sweet colors bring the audience into playful surroundings, while dense layers emulate a thick skin, suggesting strength and resilience.

The art show is scheduled to run through Friday, April 4th.

--CSC Information Services