OUR BROTHER'S KEEPER?

David Lenz's 'People on the Periphery' at Museum of Wisconsin Art

David Lenz: People on the Periphery” through Jan. 8 at the Museum of Wisconsin Art, presents an oil painting specifically with an oil painting titled Niagara Falls, 1984. It is one of only two works in the photorealistic exhibition that is devoted to figures. In this forth and from moving objects, nature takes the central role. It knows not about inequality, the ongoing theme in the artist's career. The painting is owned by the West Bend Mutual Insurance Company, a company that understands the elements of chance in this thing called life. George Orwell, writing his 1945 novel 1984, knew it too. Speaking of the human condition, he said, "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others." In most of the work represented here, Lenz asks us to look beyond superficialities, and consider what divides us. Disabilities? Grading poverty fueled by lack of jobs, lack of hope, lack of education? Living on the periphery where hunger dwells and various terrains lack, can, for those withfortitude, be a challenge to rise above. The moving portrait of children and adults, happy (or resigned) in a world which may or may not change them, suggests a drive of the dream. Who among us will go over the chasm and to tell about it?

Curator Sheena Held assembled the exhibition, and her scholarly essay about Lenz is years for free at wisconsinart.org/drop/albums.aspx.

David Lenz, Warm Winter Sun, Oil on canvas, 2016

THE CHILD-LIKE CHARM OF ‘ART IN THE GARDEN’

THERE’S AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION BETWEEN ‘CHILD-LIKE’ AND ‘CHILD-LIKE.’ The latter name the whimsy and lack of self-consciousness that animates those who are immune to the mediocrity-inducing influence of societal expectation. The music of Thelonious Monk, for instance, is child-like. ‘Child-like’, on the other hand, refers to a lack of discipline that spoils the charm of the child-like. The less successful films of Will Ferrell would fall into this category.

A high dose of childhood charm will be on display in "Art in the Garden," an event celebrating children’s art at the Villa Terrace Decorative Arts Museum on Saturday, Nov. 5, from 2-4 p.m. For the past 16 years, the Villa Terrace has enriched classes visiting from Milwaukee Public Schools with its wealth of art, architecture and botany. "Art in the Garden" will exhibit drawings, paintings, sculptures and photography that have simmered from students’ time at the Villa Terra. This art authority for children will be offered along with juice and snacks.

Artwork by Kayce Gage

DIA DE LOS MUERTOS OFRENDAS AND MARIAELI FLORE DE TOLOCHO

Celebrate your dearly departed with Latino Arts on Friday, Nov. 4. At 6 p.m., an opening reception will be held for this annual exhibition of the holiday’s traditional altars known as ofrendas, which local, regional and international artists have contributed. At 7:30 p.m. in the Latino Arts Auditorium, VVCC’s first all-female mariachi band, Mariachi Flor de Toloche, will perform their modern take on the Mexican musical tradition ($15 general admission, $20 at the door).

To learn more about the rich traditions and symbolism of Dia de los Muertos ofrendas, register for a workshop led by local artist Nicole Acosta Nov. 14-17, held from 9:30-11 a.m. and 1-2:30 p.m. each day.

"LOBILITY"

H.F. Johnson Gallery | 2001 Alford Park Drive, Kenosha

"Lobility" is a peculiar title for a ceramics exhibition. As the nominal form of "lobility," validity denotes the state of being liable to change or easily altered, in a state that does not straightforwardly apply to hardened clay. The show collects works by contemporary ceramic artists whose works hang from the wall, thereby making a three-dimensional work into a two-dimensional style of display. Hinging removed the works from their natural habitat of the pedestal, the artists face the challenge of balancing the gravitational demands of the heavy material with the artistic impulse to transgress boundaries. "Lobility" opens with a reception, 4-6 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 3.