ENTERTAINMENT & LIFESTYLE

PAFA adds nearly 300 works

By Stephen Salisbury

The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts has acquired nearly 300 works, including a monumental oil self-portrait by San Francisco artist Joan Brown and eight archival pigment prints by Philadelphia artist Jeffrey Stockbridge depicting the opioid crisis in Kensington, the institution announced Friday.

Stockbridge has gained prominence for his chronicling of Philadelphia's burgeoning drug crisis, and his photographs were featured in a recent New York Times article on the subject. These are the first of his grim works to enter the PAFA permanent collection.

Brown played a prominent role in the Bay Area's figurative-art movement in the 1970s. "We have a few artworks by Joan Brown in our collection, but nothing from this period of time," said PAFA curator of contemporary art Jodi Thoum funcion. "Such a major work really fills a gap for us in her work and strengthens our collection."

Completed in 1977, Brown's depiction of herself stands seven feet high and portrays the artist seated on a chair, wearing white gloves, beak, and a suburban, glumy dress. She is working on a still life of a vase and flowers. In reality, the artist, who died in 1990, was covered with paint more often than not.

Also among the 296 acquisitions—a mix of gifts and purchases—approved by the PAFA board at its Dec. 19 meeting is a mixed-media installation by PAFA graduate Aaron Fowler, You Are Not the Father (2017-18). The piece combines a mirror, cotton balls, and a motorized spinning globe on a little girl's deconstructed bedroom set.

About $575,000 in acquisition funds was spent to buy the works, PAFA officials said. PAFA also acquired 38 prints, drawings, and paintings from the estate of Evelyn Stattenger (1927-2016), which will join the two works already in the permanent collection. Together, the 40 works will create a thorough collection of Stattenger's abstract works.

Other highlights among purchases include three works by Cuban American artist Nestor Armando Gil, whose work was on view at PAFA last summer in the two-person exhibition "SWARM!"; 15 prints spanning the career of Philadelphia artist Ruth Fine, from the 1950s through 2017; a self-portrait, Carried Beauty (2018), by Nigerian American artist Toyin Ojih Odutola; and a commissioned drawing by Philadelphia artist Mark Stockton, The Poet in His Bedroom at Walt Whitman in repose amongst a chaos of papers in Camden in 1891.

A PAFA spokesperson said that with the addition of the 296 works, noise by women and people of color; the institution acquired 526 artworks throughout all of 2018.

By Patricia Mans

Jose hopes to design shoes for celebrities

T he 12-year-old is already planning for his future. "I want to be a shoe designer for Nike and for famous people," he says.

In the meantime, Jose is busy with his many interests. He loves basketball, action movies, window shopping, riding his bike, playing games, dancing, and singing. He also enjoys going to trampoline parks, amusement parks, and anywhere that he can climb.

Jose says he is happiest when he is finishing something he starts and when he gets new clothes and shoes.

Currently in the fifth grade, Jose loves his school and going to its events. He made the choir this year and is very proud of that.

If he could take a trip anywhere, it would be to visit Florida to see the beaches and amusement parks or to Hollywood to see the celebrities.

Jose has a more immediate goal—to be adopted. "I want a family that will keep me safe, that will love me, and that likes to do fun things," he says. He dreams of having a home with a mom and a dad and other children. Jose's social worker says he would thrive in a family that would protect, nurture, and support him.

Jose and other children wait and hope to be adopted. For information, contact Taylor Rotolo: 215-445-1872. Visit the Adoption Center website at adoption.org.

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