

Towanda man excels at capturing wildlife

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His paintings of birds are rich with texture

By Clare Howard of the Journal Star

Eureka – Wildlife painter Aaron Yount enrolled in the Cornell University home study course for bird watchers, reasoning that the more he knew about birds, the more accurately he could depict them.

He's also a member of the John Wesley Powell Audubon Chapter in Bloomington.

His paintings are rich with the texture of feathers and the plein-air quality and seasonality of light.

Audubon chapter president Rhea Edge, art professor at Eureka College, admired Yount's work and facilitated a one-person show for him at the college. Yount will have 10 pieces on display from Sept. 21 through Oct.30 in the gallery at Burgess Memorial Hall. The show includes painting and drawings.

"There is something pure, simple, honest and direct about both Aaron and his work," Edge said.

As an environmental artist herself, Edge said art can be a powerful tool to promote activism.

"In bringing Aaron's work to the Eureka College Burgess Art Gallery, I hope to offer the value of the natural experience as seen through the eyes of a gentle, compassionate artist," Edge said.

She views Yount's exhibition as another way to further an environmental message that connects people with nature and the imperative to carefully evaluate our footprint on the environment

Yount, 32, characterizes his work as representational art that strives to bring truth to the viewer.

His work is on display at Shadow Mountain Gallery in Jackson, Wyo.; Wonders Gallery in Peoria; and Freight House Gallery in El Paso.

Yount is primarily self-taught, but he attended workshops at the Beartooth School of Art in Montana.

His pieces sell for between \$250 and \$1500 and are primarily done in acrylic, but he is expanding into oils.

He focuses on a variety of birds including trumpeter swan, Canada geese, owls, cardinals, downy woodpecker, American redstart warbler and Ruby throated hummingbirds.

"Some of these pieces are quick and are done in three days. Other pieces take three weeks," he said. "They are textural pieces with close study of feathers and fur."

Yount usually paints from photographs he shoots on bird walks and hikes.

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Yount exhibit

What: Environmental artwork by Aaron Yount of Towanda.

Where: Eureka College's Burgess Art Gallery, 300 E. College Ave., Eureka.

When: Friday through Oct. 30. Gallery hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and by appointment. Opening reception: 3 to 7 p.m. Friday.

Admission: Free.

More Information: Call 467-6866; visit www.aaronyount.com