

# Visual art

## Exhibition finds inspiration in Midwest

**Annual River Market event spotlights regional talents.**

By TANYA HARTMAN  
Special to the Star

The Kansas City Artists Coalition, the largest and oldest artist-centered organization in the region, hosts the annual River Market Regional Exhibition, whose works include contemporary art being created in Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Oklahoma.

This year's juror was Antonia Boström, director of curatorial affairs at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. In her sensitive and astute catalog essay, she writes, "When we record the land that surrounds us, whether through painting, graphic means or photography, we often unconsciously record our own nostalgia and longing for a familiar or idealized landscape."

The Midwest suffuses the works in this exhibition in myriad ways, but the show is cohesive, held together by sensitive surfaces, technical proficiency, and a startling lack of ego and pretension.

This year's River Market exhibition represents many artists working across disciplines, yet each work displayed allows the materials with which it is composed to lead and shape content. There is not one work that forces intention upon form. Instead, you will find artists engaged in balancing the communication of ideas with the natural proclivities inherent in metal, wood, clay, paint and film.

For instance, Genevieve Flynn, a self-taught metals artist from Kansas City, interprets the natural indentations created from hammering copper as an undulating



Genevieve Flynn's "Sea Life Vessel"

### ON EXHIBIT

The River Market Regional Exhibition continues at the Kansas City Artist's Coalition, 201 Wyandotte St., through Aug. 22. Hours are 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday. For more information: 816-421-0656 or [www.kansascityartistscoalition.org](http://www.kansascityartistscoalition.org)

octopus, a crab and tentacles of seaweed. Her receptacle, "Sea Life Vessel" (2013), made of copper, silver and gold leaf, has a dreamy beauty, because the imagery is so artfully and organically informed by the process of creation. Flynn engages the natural world through ancient and laborious techniques such as repoussé that dictate the use of the body through physical labor. The result is a vessel whose forms move fluidly across and through its structure so that image and material become one.

Flynn was one of four artists Boström selected for a cash award. She received the top award of \$1,000. David



BRETT CHENOWETH

"And So It Is" by Brett Chenoweth is one of four prize winners in the River Market Regional Exhibition.

Titterington netted the \$500 award, and Brett Chenoweth and Marydorsey Wanless received \$250 each.

Titterington, a painter living in Prairie Village who is a recent graduate of the University of Kansas (In the interest of full disclosure, I teach in the art department there), creates depictions of skies and atmospheres, of-

ten devoid of overt human presence.

In his oil-on-wood painting, "Ephemera" (2014), the surface is created by layers of glaze that pool and surge. From these natural occurrences, characteristic of painting with a traditional glaze medium, Titterington "finds" clouds, blue light and dense passages of

opaque shadow. The fact that the painting is very small adds to its allure, as he attempts to paint something vast and incomprehensible in a manner that is simultaneously passionate and accessible.

Betsy Knabe Roe's wonderful fiber sculpture, "Core Remains Series #78" (2014), explores connections be-

### ART REVIEW



"Ephemera" by David Titterington



From "Seagulls in Infrared" by Marydorsey Wanless

tween humans and other life forms, and the manner in which they impact each other.

Maryanna Adelman's small graphite drawing on paper, "In Flight" (2012), is raked with the energy of erasure and mark, the bird depicted clearly found through the process of drawing.

In the Midwest, the raw fact of the weather is a constant, with violent and damaging storms in the spring, blistering heat and humidity in the summer, and bitter, frigid temperatures in the winter. Perhaps it is this constant reminder that we are each vastly smaller than the land, the sky and the interactions of the elements that create our environment, that allows the artists in this exhibition to engage with the materials of their practice with such reverence and finesse.