

The art of acquisition

An exhibit in Riverside paints a picture of how museums obtain their collections.

BY ALEX GROVES
STAFF WRITER

Few people are familiar with what it's like to be on the acquisition committee of a museum, a job that can be arduous and challenging.

Art can come from a variety of sources; it can be promised, pledged or purchased. Acquisition team members must determine whether they want to add a piece to their permanent collection and, if they do, must find a way to care for and store it.

"The Art of Collecting,"

Recent Acquisitions and Pledged Gifts," an exhibit at the Riverside Art Museum, seeks to tell that story. It was guest-curated by two members of the museum's acquisition committee, artist Sue Mitchell and professional art collector Todd Wingate.

The exhibit includes prints, photographs, oil paintings and abstract works, all of which have gone through the acquisition

ART

FROM PAGE 1

committee to become a part of the museum's collection.

Mitchell said many people are not really familiar with how vast a museum collection can be or how many works can end up becoming a part of it.

The purpose of the exhibit, she said, is to show how collections work and from where they are sourced.

"People can see what we've collected over a period of time through the generous gifts over the years," she said. "And sometimes they're very small pieces, sometimes they're very large and whimsical, so it makes for a very interesting collection."



COURTESY OF RIVERSIDE ART MUSEUM

"Untitled," by Elke Zauner, is on view at the Riverside Art Museum.

The special exhibits inside the installation include more than a dozen photographs donated in 2014, and the museum's entire col-

lection of works commissioned by philanthropist and computer software giant Peter Norton.

The museum receives a replica

COURTESY OF RIVERSIDE ART MUSEUM

Michael Stone's "57x4" part of Riverside Art Museum's "The Art of Collecting."

text that talks about the ways people can contribute to the museum and very specifically about the way certain things have come in."

Mitchell hopes the curation leads to more donations, but is pleased that it achieved the mission of explaining how the museum acquires art.

"Even from the acquisition committee, they're appreciating the story," Mitchell said. "Because as a committee we need to be able to explain what we do, and it was a thorough review of the process."

"I think we've all appreciated the exercise of putting the show together and getting better at knowing what we do as a committee."

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SEE ART • PAGE 6

IF YOU GO

When: Through Wednesday, March 25
Where: 3425 Mission Inn Ave., Riverside.

Admission: \$5 general admission, \$3 for students and seniors
Information: 951-684-7111, riversideartmuseum.org.

of a piece of artwork commissioned by Norton every year around Christmas, but this is the first time the museum has displayed all the works together.

Each piece in the exhibition is accompanied by signage that explains its origins.

"Sue did an amazing job of creating text that explains this in various ways," Wingate said. "That's really the educational portion of this exhibit, is there's