

Spartanburg County Museum of Art Features Works by Vadim Bora, Marcus Hamilton and Lin Barnhardt

Spring offerings at the Spartanburg County Museum of Art in Spartanburg, SC, include retrospectives by Russian-born Vadim Bora, of Asheville, NC, as well as Charlotte, NC-based cartoonist Marcus Hamilton, the pen behind the daily cartoon strip, *Dennis The Menace*. A third exhibit offers the architectural models of Lin Barnhardt of Mt. Pleasant, NC, whose work employs a dropped vanishing point simulating a bird's eye view of landmark buildings.

Vadim Bora, whose show runs from Mar. 7 through Apr. 17, 2005, in the Milliken Gallery, was born in North Ossetia - a republic in Russia's rugged Caucasus Mountains. His work reflects his classical European art training as well as the tribal folk art of the Northern Caucasus. A Dutch critic described his resulting style as "exuberant expressionism" - splashes of color and texture that take the form of portrait and landscape, sculpture and painting. From monumental sculptures in bronze and terra cotta to small fine-line pen and ink drawings, the work is linked only by artist and timeframe: all were created in the past decade, during which time the artist settled in Asheville where he maintains a studio and gallery.

Museum Exhibits Coordinator Scott Cunningham says text for the show will be provided in English and Russian - a tribute to Spartanburg's international flavor. "With a shrinking globe, language becomes even more important," he says. "Historically Americans have been more linguistically isolated than people in many other parts of the world. Although we're making strides today to learn other languages, as a nation, we often still don't seem to understand that a language is not just about words...the way of life that nourishes speech is an integral part of verbal expression. I think that institutions that present and promote culture need to pay more attention to that."

Awarded permanent residency by the US Government under the coveted status of "Person With Extraordinary Abilities," Bora

has work in the permanent collections of museums throughout his native Russia, as well as the office of Sen. Bob Dole, the French Consulate in Atlanta and the corporate collections of BBC London.

While Bora's work boasts international flavor, Marcus Hamilton's boasts universal appeal. The Charlotte resident began drawing *Dennis the Menace* more than a decade ago - handpicked by strip creator Hank Ketcham as he neared retirement. The Spartanburg retrospective examines what goes into bringing Dennis to life each weekday, as well as Hamilton's early career as a successful commercial illustrator. Over the years, Hamilton created hundreds of illustrations for magazines including *Cosmopolitan*, *Good Housekeeping* and *Reader's Digest*. The museum show includes some of his favorites - including a profile of Bob Hope as Santa Claus that appeared in the Dec. 1978 issue of *Saturday Evening Post*. Also on display will be some of Hamilton's original paintings most of which have never been seen in public before.

Hamilton's exhibit, titled, *From Hope (Bob) to The Menace (Dennis)*, is on exhibit from Mar. 7 through Apr. 24 in the museum's Parsons Gallery.

Lin Barnhardt's work in the Burwell Gallery, on view from Mar. 7 through May 8, 2005, is titled *Homage to Hopper And Other Works*, and consists of three-dimensional reconstructions of historic homes and landmarks crafted by the artist in clay. The pieces are rendered from a bird's eye view, and skews the perspective as part of the design. The approach gives viewers a view they don't normally see, rendering even familiar buildings - like those depicted by the great American artist Edward Hopper - in an unusual way.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Museum at 864/582-7616 or at (www.spartanburgartmuseum.org).