



Photos by Craig Bailey, FLORIDA TODAY

**Surfer's dream wave.** Artwork by Reggie Holladay, titled "Shore Break," is on display at the Brevard Museum of Art and Science.

The exhibition was the brainchild of Tony Sasso, executive director for the East Coast Surfing Hall of Fame and Museum.

# Exhibit rides high

*Wave-related works capture surfing's beauty*

BY PAM HARBAUGH  
FLORIDA TODAY

Look at the 1925 marble bust by Alexander Oppler on a pedestal in the museum lobby. It's festooned with a straw hat, shades and a plastic lei. No doubt, the Brevard Museum of Art and Science has been invaded.

Where one might normally see delicate paintings or sculptures on refined display, an exhibit with the sound and fury of surfing and all its attendant paraphernalia has taken root. It's called "Eternal Summer: The Art of Surf Culture," and it's waaay cool.

"It really captures the vibe of surfing," said nonsurfer Rick Gillon of Melbourne.

"The county needs this," said Sandy Gettings of Indialantic.

His wife, Patti Gibbons, has gone to the museum regularly and has served as a docent. She said the variety of art from a historical viewpoint to current culture reflects the "whole sentiment of the surfing community."

"It's fantastic," she said. The exhibition comprises a collection of all things surfing, from vintage and new surfboards to two- and three-dimensional artwork by serious artists/surfers to displays of surfboard shaping and laminating rooms. There are surf videos and even an altar of sorts to Duke Kahanamoku, the early 20th century king of surfing who introduced the sport to the rest of the world.



And, yes, there are the points of whimsy, like Jerry O'Shea's mishmash assemblage of cast-off rubber sandals, called, simply "Flip Flops."

The exhibition was the brainchild of Tony Sasso, executive director for the East Coast Surfing Hall of Fame and Museum.

That facility, housed in the Ron Jon Watersport building in Cocoa Beach, is small in comparison to the Brevard Museum of Art and Science in Melbourne. So when museum executive director Dane Pollei approached Sasso about a year and a half ago to collaborate on a joint exhibition in the fine art museum, Sasso was immediately interested.

Pollei said the exhibition should help people realize museums can display works that immediately relate to the social

See EXHIBIT, 4E



**Above:** Plenty of patrons — surfers and nonsurfers — checked out the "Eternal Summer" exhibit Saturday at the Brevard Museum of Art and Science. **Left:** Dane Kovarik with the Graffiti SK8 Zone team did some tricks during the "Art! Surf! Party!" block party that took place Saturday outside the museum.

# Art shows spiritual side of surfing

BY PAM HARBAUGH  
FLORIDA TODAY

The "Eternal Summer: The Art of Surf Culture" exhibition is all together powerful, fun, insightful and reverent for a lifestyle that borders on the spiritual.

Jim Hannan's diptych, "Split Peak Soup" (2006, pigmented resin and fiber glass cloth) shines with spirit and flecks of color. If you were paddling out into this breaking surf, it appears translucent, with waves rising up to a dripping sky.

There are many satisfying works by Rick Piper, a popular area surf artist. His "Back to the Island" (2006, acrylic on wood) places the sea all around an island climbing up to a cloud-laced sky.

Reggie Halladay's "Shore Break" (1997, acrylic on art board) contrasts textured foam to sleekness of water before it is churned into crashing waves.

And then there is the mystery and power of work by Eric Manus.

In "It's Bigger Than It Looks" (acrylic on canvas), two surfers are diminished by a huge wave advancing on them. The top of the wave is translucent green, giving way to blue crest. The surfers

look and point at the wave. Are they going to turn their boards and try to ride this monster, or will they dive into it and safety?

The exhibition's "wow" piece is Manus' "The Drop," a large painting with a intrepid surfer dropping on a deep, black/blue wave. The surfer cuts the top of the wave with his board, leaving a momentary scar of white foam.

An interesting mock-up of a shaping and laminating room has been installed by surfboard creator Ricky Carroll. There also is a display of buckets and shoes used by Carroll in his work.

Michael "Nemo" Nemnich's "Journey" (2000, mixed media) shows the artist's fascination with the primitive icons in the eternal summer. In the painting, a tortoise and fish are the sole inhabitants poised in waves obscuring the sun, low over the ocean.

Bruce Reynolds' work is provocative and resonant. He is drawn to piecing together images either by paint on canvas or by found objects. In "Surf Party" (2006, acrylic on masonite), a silly looking surfer dressed in a striped shirt and party hat holds a balloon that reads "locals only."

In Reynolds' "What's Love Got to do With It" (2006, acrylic on

masonite), a man's wrists bleed white, as does a wave he is riding. Alongside, a voluptuous woman appears beneath the words "Don't go baby." We don't know if it's the woman or the surfer uttering those words. Perhaps both.

There also is a good array of art surf boards. Patrick Madden's "Pin-Up Girls" (2005, polyfiber-inlay) uses images of postcard pinup girls laced by a Hawaiian lei. Mark Longenecker's "Pray for Surf" (2002) shows wild imagery associated with youthful longing to bust out.

Yes, in all, there are a lot of works in this exhibition.

Museum registrar Jose Marquez said it took about two weeks to install it. Most exhibitions take less than five days, he said.

"There's so much work," he said. "No one leaves here indifferent."

Unlike the museum's exhibitions of decorative paintings, a visit to "Eternal Summer" begs for a lengthier stay, especially if you want to see it all and watch the films running in the galleries.

"I'm just so excited because I think this is going to be way beyond what anybody expects," said Tony Sasso, executive direc-

## Check it out

When: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Tuesdays through

Saturdays and 1 to 5 p.m.

Sundays through Sept. 10

Where: Brevard Museum of

Art and Science, 1463

Highland Ave., Melbourne

Admission: \$5, \$3 for

seniors. \$2 for kids, free

on Thursdays

Information: 242-0737

Special event: gallery walk

with Bruce Reynolds at

1 p.m. Aug. 17

tor for the East Coast Surfing Hall of Fame & Museum. "I think surfers sometimes give themselves short shrift on their creativity and the cultural experience of surfing all together.

"We know we're a special tribe and it's a lifestyle, but I don't think we realize sometimes how much we have affected America's culture, language, dress, attitude. I think it's going to give the surfing community kind of an interesting perspective on their own lifestyle. But equally I think it's going to give the nonsurfing community really an interesting perspective on the surfing lifestyle." ■

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## ART

# Museum hopes surf exhibit draws new wave of viewers

EXHIBIT, from 1E

exhibition.

Reynolds is a fine artist who has work in the permanent collection of the Walt Disney Corp. He has shown in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Washington Craft Show, on the campus of Northwestern University outside of Chicago and at invitational outdoor art shows in Laguna Beach, Calif., Baltimore and Kansas City, Mo.

Reynolds said the only other surf culture exhibition he has seen in a fine arts museum was "Surf Culture Redux," which appeared last summer in the Laguna Art Museum in Laguna Beach, Calif.

Pollei also expects the exhibition to draw a new wave of museum visitors.

That was the case with Indian resident Joe LaFave, 16, who was on a date with his girlfriend, Lindsey Johnson, 16, of Satellite Beach. It was the first time either of them had been to the museum. It was the subject of the exhibition that attracted them. They said they would like to return to the museum.

"It's awesome, unbelievable," said Bill Winger, 45, at the exhibition opening Saturday evening. It was the first time he and his family had been in the museum. "We did not know it was here."

Sasso turned to another Cocoa Beach resident, artist and surfer, Bruce Reynolds, to co-curate the

REYNOLDS' WEB EXTRA. Behind-the-scenes with pro surfer/artist Bruce Reynolds at [floridatoday.com](http://floridatoday.com)