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Seen & Heard: Minneapolis gallery to present body of Onofrio's work

Megan Kennedy May 17, 2013



Rochester artist Judy Onofrio. Photo credit Mark Luninberg.

Mark Luninberg

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Normally a house full of animal bones inspires terror.

But walk into Rochester artist **Judy Onofrio's** house, and you would find it enchanting and beautiful and just awesome.

I got a sneak peek at some of her pieces by luck — her assistants were just wrapping them up for transport to a gallery early the next day.

These bones — which range from the teeniest, tiniest bones you could imagine to some very large ones — are part of Judy's upcoming exhibition: Judy Onofrio: Full Circle, which will run from May 23 through Aug. 29 at Thomas Barry Fine Arts, a Minneapolis gallery.

"I have made things my whole life," Onofrio said. "When I was 30, and my children were a little older, I was able to completely throw myself into my work professionally and it's been 24/7 ever since."

She is completely self-taught — no formal training — but obviously had some great guidance along the way. Her works range from sculptures (including some more than 19 feet tall) to mosaics full of the tiniest details.

"The pieces I am working on now are more spiritual in nature," Onofrio said. "I love the idea that I am bringing bones back to life — it all comes Full Circle."

After some health issues in 2008, Onofrio began working on this new series. Each has a story of meaning and inspiration behind it and are all made from animal bones — mostly cow and buffalo bones — some of which she has collected and excavated herself on nearby farms.

Onofrio's work has been collected in museums and galleries around the country, including the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. She's received prestigious awards, including two lifetime achievement awards, from the McKnight Foundation and the Minnesota Craft Council.

"I consider myself very lucky to be able to follow my passion and to have the freedom to do it," Onofrio said.

For more information about her and her art — including photos of her current work — visit www.judyonofrio.com.

Rochester native **Johnny Pemberton** moved to Los Angeles after graduating from Lourdes High School in 1999 and attending college at Florida State University.

Since then, he has excelled as a standup comedian and actor, appearing in commercials, TV shows, movies — one of them Oscar-nominated — and on comedy stages across the country.

Last spring we checked in with Pemberton when he had upcoming parts in "21 Jump Street" and "Neighborhood Watch" and was shooting a pilot for ABC. That pilot, titled "The Family Tools," was picked up by ABC and the first episode aired on May 1. Pemberton is part of the regular cast.

"It's a non-traditional family comedy about a guy that has bad luck in all he does and comes home (and due to his father's health problems) has to take over the family business," Pemberton said. "I play the awkward nephew, Mason McCormick."

Also since our last check-in, Pemberton has appeared in the movie "This is 40" and voiced a character, Dr. Eigerman, for a few episodes of the animated series "Bob's Burgers." And he's had a few other roles.