

Monday, June 16, 2008

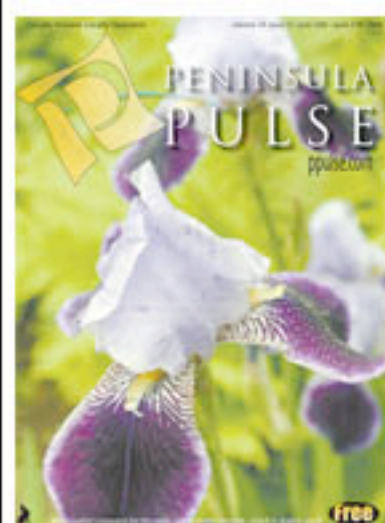
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Art & Galleries

"Wence & Sandra Martinez: Presence" Scheduled to Open May 15 at Fairfield Art Center

May 02, 2008

On Thursday, May 15, the Fairfield Art Center in downtown Sturgeon Bay will officially launch its summer season with the exhibition "Wence & Sandra Martinez: Presence." The exhibition, showcased in the first-floor Main Gallery, will open with a free reception at 6:30 pm. The acclaimed Door County artists will be on hand for the reception, which will include wine and hors d'oeuvres.

"Presence" incorporates several pieces of new work created this past winter in Teotitlan del Valle, Wence Martinez's home village in Oaxaca, Mexico. The husband-and-wife team often spends the winter offseason in the village, working on their art, visiting neighboring households to select yarn for new weavings and building a bed-and-breakfast that also will serve as an artist's retreat. They return to their Jacksonport-based Martinez Studio in the spring.



"Arbolitos" by Wence Martinez.

"We are grateful to the Fairfield for such a lovely venue right here in our community - for the faith they had in us to provide an exhibit so soon after our return," Sandra Martinez said.

The body of work featured in "Presence" includes hand-dyed and woven Wence Martinez rugs as well as a series of Sandra Martinez paintings that were inspired by the efforts of local farmers to preserve indigenous seeds that are being systematically destroyed.



"Pearls," 46x38, acrylic on paper, 2008, by Sandra Martinez.

According to Sandra Martinez, this past winter's visit started as an art retreat for her after a long year of recovery from hand surgery.

"Since I couldn't make any art, it started me thinking about roots - that what goes on under the surface is integral to the visible, it precedes and nurtures the visible," she explained. Her awareness of an indigenous plant movement, which is deeply affecting local communities, also infused her new paintings.

"The drawings of roots became broader talismans, symbols of the spirit of the plants," she continued. "They are meant to honor, uplift and energize the sacred and the natural in the face of a tenacious assault by corporate, genetically altered, experimental food crops."



"Maguey" by Wence Martinez.

During the coming summer in Door County, some of Sandra Martinez's paintings will be reborn on her husband's loom. Others will become patterns on her well-known functional and wearable-art design projects.

In addition, Wence Martinez will review the many photographs he took during winter and process the many themes that will influence his own designs during the busy summer season.

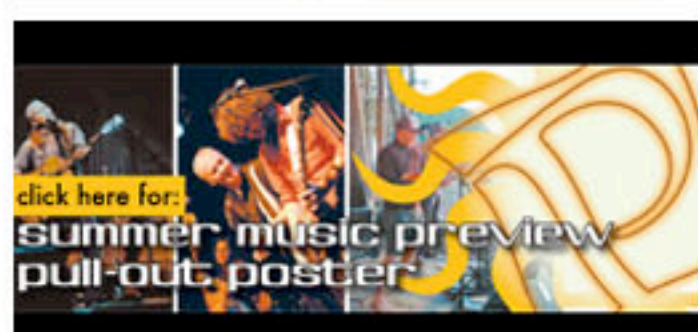


"Semillas," 46x36, acrylic on paper, 2008, by Sandra Martinez.

Master weaver Wence Martinez is a full-blooded Zapotec Indian whose family still lives and works in Teotitlan del Valle, a community of approximately 5,000 people that has been renowned for textile weaving for centuries. Martinez himself has been weaving for more than three decades, and he has garnered international recognition for his one-of-a-kind artwork. He carries on the Zapotec legacy by using hand-spun, hand-dyed wool, weaving his original contemporary and traditional designs into museum-quality tapestries for the floor or wall. His looms are handmade in the village.

Wence and Sandra Martinez will conduct a slide presentation and artists' talk in the Fairfield Art Center's Main Gallery at 6:30 pm on Thursday, June 12. "Wence & Sandra Martinez: Presence" will run through Saturday, June 28.

The Fairfield Art center is open free to the public from 10 am - 5 pm Wednesday through Saturday until May 15, after which it will resume its summer hours of 10 am - 5 pm Monday through Saturday.



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