

'Infinite Mirror' a reflection of America's cultural diversity

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My America by Sungho Choi is among the artworks in the exhibit titled Infinite Mirror: Images of American Identity on view Friday, Sept. 2, through Sunday, Dec. 4, at the Thorne-Sagendorph Art Gallery at Keene State College

America's shared culture is explored in "Infinite Mirror: Images of American Identity," an art exhibition on view Friday, Sept. 2, through Sunday, Dec. 4, at the Thorne-Sagendorph Art Gallery at Keene State College.

The showing explores America's self-image through paintings, prints, photographs and video by 42 artists "whose insightful works reveal the triumphs, tragedies, relationships, and traditions that inform our notions of nationhood," curators said.

Keene State English Professor Michael Antonucci presents a guided walk through the exhibit at 6:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 9, during a reception hosted by the Friends of the Thorne from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the gallery.

This exhibit is part of Keene State's Biennial Symposium "What Sustains Us" Wednesday to Friday, Nov. 2-4, during which time the Thorne hosts a panel discussion to include one of the curators of "Infinite Mirror." The exhibition centers on the United States' founding principal of "E Pluribus Unum" — "out of many, one" — a concept that acknowledges the country's diversity and expresses its unity around shared values.

American artists of African, Arab, European, Asian, Latino and Native American descent examine patriotism, communication, the struggle for acceptance, and what it truly means to be an American in the 21st century.

"Humor, heartache, anger, apprehension — all emotions are evoked by these works, raising questions about race, class, gender and age," curators said.

Four main themes run through the exhibit: Self-Selection, Pride, Assimilation, and Protest, providing audiences with the opportunity to re-examine both the story and storytellers of the quintessential "American dream."

"In analyzing the diversities in the American population, 'Infinite Mirror' speaks to myriad experiences and the ways we form and connect to an American identity," curators said.

Infinite Mirror is developed by Artrain Inc. and Brandywine Workshop, Philadelphia, Pa., and is toured by International Arts & Artists, Washington, D.C. Curator Blake Bradford also is director of education of Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia.

Also on exhibit is "Figuratively Speaking," which runs from Friday, Sept. 2 through Sunday, Oct. 2. Stephen J. Lucey, assistant professor of art at Keene State, curated this exhibit of portraits from the Thorne's Permanent Collection. A portion of this exhibit will remain on display for the Friends of the Thorne's education program for area schoolchildren from Friday, Oct. 14, through Thursday, Nov. 3.

The exhibits, reception, and educational program are free and open to the public. Gallery hours are Sundays to Wednesdays from noon to 5 p.m.; Thursdays and Fridays from noon to 7 p.m.; and Saturdays from noon to 8 p.m.

The gallery is closed Monday, Sept. 5, for Labor Day, Nov. 11, for Veterans Day, and Nov. 23-27 for Thanksgiving break.

For details, call 358-2720 or log onto keene.edu/tsag.