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**HERE COMES
MR. KNOW-IT-ALL**

Artist Wayne White
to be featured at
Bob Rauschenberg Gallery
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Wayne White to be featured at Bob Rauschenberg Gallery

By MEGHAN McCOY

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Over the past two years Bob Rauschenberg Gallery Director Jade Dellinger has focused on continuing Rauschenberg's legacy through conversations, as well as through curating a show.

"Wayne White is an artist I have long been interested in," Dellinger said. "He brings some interesting things to the table in terms of his context."

The upcoming exhibit at the Bob Rauschenberg Gallery will feature "Wayne White: Here Comes Mr. Know-It-All" from Sept. 11, through Nov. 7, with a reception from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 11.

Dellinger said when Rauschenberg first arrived in Florida he did a series called "The Cardboards." While Rauschenberg worked in New York he would always talk about finding inspiration in his environment. Inspiration came from walking around the block no more than two times while picking up items on the street to incorporate in his pieces.

When Rauschenberg arrived on Captiva he found sand and sun instead of items on the street, which led him to using the boxes that contained his life possessions from the move.

"Wayne's work is often taking found things," he said of the connection between the two artists.

White's work is often times comprised of finding paintings at thrift stores and reworking them into his own masterpiece. His puppets, now referred to as sculptures, are made out of cardboard.

"I've always had the do-it-yourself approach," White said in a prepared statement. "I grew up in this blue collar family and didn't have a lot of toys, so you had to make your own fun. Building forts out of sticks and scrap lumber - that's where I learned the joy of making something from nothing."

Some of the art he is known for are



PHOTO PROVIDED

Wayne White's "Word Paintings," titled "Art is Supposed to Hypnotize You or Something."

the characters Randy, Cool Cat, Chicky Baby and Dirty Dog for the "Pee-wee's Playhouse."

A week leading up to the exhibit opening, White will be an artist-in-residence at FSW working with students to create a gigantic puppet of Rauschenberg. Dellinger said he will be using repurposed cardboard to make a large scale portrait.

"We are commissioning him to do this functional sculpture that he is going to be using in a performance during open night," he said, adding that he thinks Rauschenberg would have appreciated a big portrait made out of cardboard. "It's going to be a cool project for us. I'm excited to kick off the season with this."

Dellinger said he is excited about having a show with a newly built sculpture element at the gallery.

"At least two or three students will work very directly with him," he said

during his residency. "We may engage additional students in the performance."

In addition, the exhibit will also feature White's collection of watercolor paintings completed in 2013 during his residency at the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation Residency program on Captiva. Dellinger said the foundation has offered a wide variety of artists, seven or eight a year, to stay at the Captiva compound for a month at a time while working in Rauschenberg's studio.

"Wayne was one of the early partici-

pants there. He lived and worked in Captiva for a month," Dellinger said, adding that White did a lot of work that was inspired by being out there. "He did a watercolor painting titled 'Ding Darling.' His works that he made have not been shown here locally. That was part of the inspiration too . . . to take an artist that lived and worked on the Bob Rauschenberg compound and show the work that he did there."

Other work that will be on display includes White's "Word Paintings," which Dellinger said include one line jokes.

He said he thinks the work is poking fun at the idea of fine art and making work that is really humorous. He said White's work will incorporate words and phrases on paintings of landscapes and mountains.

The gallery will be transformed during the exhibit.

"He often likes to create the backdrop on which his paintings are hung," Dellinger said of White painting the gallery wall.

The gallery is located on the Florida SouthWestern State College campus, 8099 College Pkwy., in Fort Myers. It is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday.

For more information, call (239) 489-9313 or visit www.RauschenbergGallery.com.

For more information about the artist, White, visit www.WayneWhiteArt.com.

Follow Meghan @IslanderMeghan on Twitter.