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While the economy has slowed down and business may not be booming as usual right now, sometimes the extra free time can allow us more opportunities to do the things we really enjoy. When was the last time you visited the Tucson Museum of Art? It may have been a while, and with the Arizona Biennial 2009 currently in full swing, now is the perfect time to do so.

The Arizona Biennial '09 will last until Sept. 26, and is a completely unique exhibit. TMA's Web site describes the Biennial exhibition best: "Open to all Arizona artists over 18 years of age working in any media, the exhibition is a much-anticipated opportunity for artists in the region to gain broad exposure for their work." This means that Arizona artists of all ages who create a broad range of art forms (from photography to watercolors to extremely unique styles) have entered the Biennial, making for a completely varied exhibit that showcases local contemporary artistic talent.

While almost anyone was able to enter the Biennial, not all have the opportunity to have their works shown. Tim Rodgers, currently the chief curator at the New Mexico Museum of Art since 2004 and a graduate of Arizona State University, has served as the Biennial juror this year and chose the pieces that would be shown in the exhibit. Some of his choices? An archival inkjet print book by Beata Wehr; a paper mounted to foam core tiles piece by Mona Higuchi; an oil canvas on panel by Chris Miller; latex on a recycled billboard by Andrea Jensen; an archival digital print by Karen M. Strom; a photographic sculpture by Alan Bur Johnson; a pigment ink creation by Judy Miller (see photo); plus, plenty of more traditional art forms you're sure to enjoy.



In addition to visiting the Biennial on your own time (TMA is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sunday, 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.; and closed Mondays and major holidays), you may also attend the upcoming event, A Walk with the Curator on Sept. 16 at 11:30 a.m. At the event, you'll be hosted by chief curator and curator of modern and contemporary art, Julie Sasse, while getting an "insider's look" at the Arizona Biennial '09 and how it all came together.

In addition to the current Biennial exhibit, TMA frequently hosts entertaining and interesting events and exhibits art lovers won't want to miss. Some of the current and upcoming happenings include DeGrazia: A Modernist Perspective exhibit, going on now through Oct. 25; Ceramics Classes for Adults, going on now through Aug. 27 every Thursday; Orientation and Open House for prospective students of the Museum School for the Visual Arts, Aug. 12; Good to Gourd Family Art Day, Sept. 6; and Ansel Adams; A Legacy exhibit, Oct. 10 through Feb. 14 2010. If that's not enough to fill your summer and fall art needs, we don't know what is.

For more information, contact the Tucson Museum of Art at 520.624.6333 or visit www.tucsonmuseumofart.org.