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'Moods For Moderns' at Town Hall Theatre

Submitted by Tracy Robinson



Contemporary painter Michael Robinson Photo provided

Oakland-based contemporary painter Michael Robinson will be the subject of a special free art exhibit at the Town Hall Theatre in Lafayette through May 31.

Titled "Moods For Moderns," the show features six of Robinson's unique originals that highlight his three main formats - abstract figurative, mid-century geometrics and modern surrealism.

Robinson, 65, is well known in the Bay Area. Before embarking on a career as a painter, he worked as a reporter at the Oakland Tribune and the San Francisco Examiner. As a former touring musician, he was featured in a wide range of Bay Area and California newspapers.

Ironically, he did not get back into the visual arts until shortly after he turned 60 and spent four years painting under a pseudonym. "Moods for Moderns" is his first solo exhibit.

Armed with a playful attitude, he's becoming known for a deceptively simple style imbued with hidden meanings and cultural references. He is particularly regarded for his love of big ideas and for his bold color schemes. His major influences are Kandinsky, Miro, Warhol, Klee, and Basquiat.

"Moods for Moderns" features the iconic "In the Belly of the Beast," which refers to a controversial book by Jack Abbott championed by the late Norman Mailer. "Seance for Penny Cent" reveals how he often borrows from Monet to create lush backgrounds designed to intrigue the viewer.

Surrealism has had a big impact on Robinson as exemplified by "Voices from the Graveyard Shift." And the background for "There Beneath a Sharp and Sudden Sky" reflects the love he had for stormy Midwestern skies growing up in Kansas City. The title is a blend of songs from Crown the Empire and the Beatles.

For display hours, call the Town Hall Theatre box office at (925) 283-1557. Robinson's works can be viewed at www.michaelrobinsonart.com.

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