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Vernacular Voices showcases self-taught, outsider, visionary art at the Ogden

BY SUE STRACHAN | sstrachan@theadvocate.com MAR 14, 2019 - 7:00 AM

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"The King is Coming" (1994) by Zelle Manning, oil on canvas, on view in "Vernacular Voices" at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, March 8 2019-July 14, 2019.

Sister Gertrude Morgan received a revelation from God to create art.

Herbert Singleton carved wood into walking sticks, sculptures and bas reliefs.

Welmon Sharhorne used a Bic pen on manila folders to create his drawings.

None of them went to art school.

These three artists are featured in "Vernacular Voices: Self-taught, Outsider and Visionary Artists from the Permanent Collection," now on view at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, home to one of the most important collections of self-taught, outsider and visionary art in the nation.

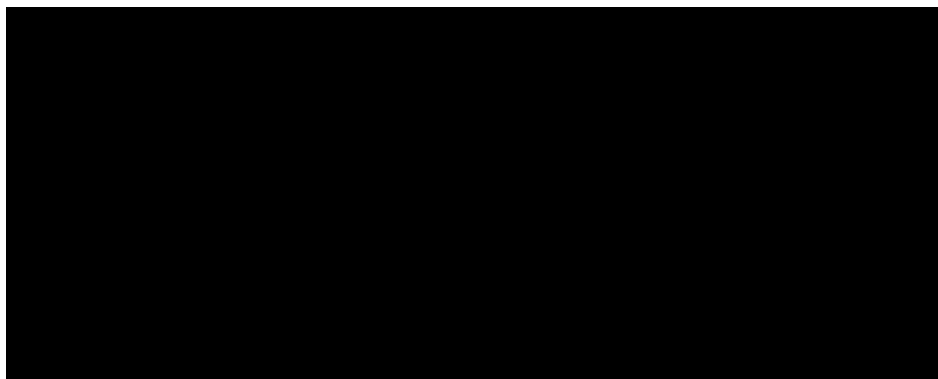
Self-taught, outsider and visionary art encompasses men and women who are not trained as artists and take their inspiration from themselves, the world around them and God, often working with nontraditional materials and outside traditional norms.

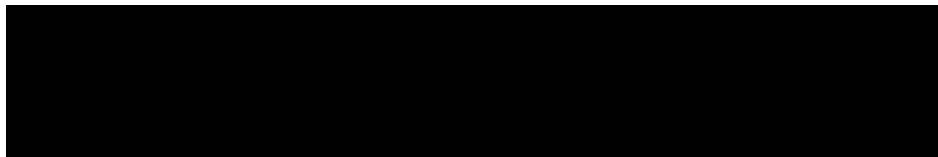
"These works showcase a diverse group of artists who have each created truly original bodies of work outside of any formal academic dialogue," said Bradley Sumrall, curator of the

collection. "The art from 'Vernacular Voices' is drawn from life itself — intuitive, honest and tied to the culture in which it was created."

The museum has showcased its self-taught, outsider and visionary art collection through the years, but this exhibition is noted for a number of pieces that have not been on view before, such as the paint on paper "Service Sunday Night Thursday Night" by Sister Gertrude Morgan; "Just a Design" and an untitled painting by Willie White; a recently donated paint on tin piece by David Butler that he carved with a hatchet; a wire sculpture by Lonnie Holley; two ink on paper pieces by Helen Burkhart Mayfield; and "First King and Queen" sculpture by Bessie Harvey. The exhibition also features almost in its entirety the museum's collection of art by Minnie Evans, known for her ornately drawn, mixed media pieces on paper.

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"I gravitate toward vernacular art because it represents the purest acts of creation, unadulterated by the market, academia or the art world," said Sumrall. "Whether inspired by the Holy Spirit or childhood memories, whether used as an escape from a difficult world or just a way to fill the time, this is truly art for art's sake: visceral, humble and wholly original."

**Ogden Museum of Southern Art, 925 Camp St.;
ogdenmuseum.org**

"Vernacular Voices": Through July 14, 2019

**Opening reception during Ogden After Hours:
Thursday, March 14, 6 p.m.-8 p.m.: Kim Carson:**
She performs original "Louisiana Tonkabilly" songs, with influences including Hank Williams, Merle Haggard, Loretta Lynn, Buck Owens, Waylon Jennings and Ray Price.

Ogden After Hours is free to museum members and children under 5; \$13.50 for adults; \$11 for seniors, teachers, students and military; \$6.75

for children ages 5 to 17 and UNO students with
id.

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