

# The Columbus Dispatch

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## 'After Hours' exhibit showcases talents of state workers

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By Nancy Gilson / For The Columbus Dispatch

Forty-four people demonstrate their artistic prowess in the diverse exhibit "After Hours: Artwork by State of Ohio Employees" at the Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery.

"Finding time to nurture one's creative voice after a long day at work takes physical and emotional energy," wrote the three jurors who selected the works. "This exhibition demonstrates that if you have the passion for art-making, you will always make the time."

The jurors — Mary Cusick, director of TourismOhio; Kevin Milstead, an assistant deputy director in the Department of Administrative Services; and Stephanie Rond, a visual artist and art consultant — chose more than 60 works.

The exhibit is particularly strong in photography but also includes multimedia pieces, paintings, sculptures and textiles.

Wentong Lin, an environmental specialist for the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, has three black-and-white photographs in the exhibit, including "Chairs," a beautiful abstract composition of stacked, metal chairs.

Another strong black-and-white photo is "Little Boy Big World" by Bethany Bass, who works in Opportunities for Ohioans With Disabilities. The large, vertical shot is dominated by a cloud-filled sky, with a small detail in the lower-right corner: a man holding a little boy's hand.

The work of Kirstin L. Krumsee, a library consultant for the State Library of Ohio, is represented by two enlarged nature shots — "Bloom" and "Green Buds." Both are dramatic and impressive.

So, too, is "Follow the Yellow Brick Road" by James M. Richardson, also of the Ohio EPA. In the moody street scene, a path appears golden from streetlights, making it stand out from a snow-covered sidewalk.



Jennifer Whitten, employed by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, creates bead-work assemblages that, she says, represent “tools of a psychological necessity — dimensional renderings of interior processes and concepts.” Her delicate but forceful works include “Optimism: Orange Rake,” with tiny blue, yellow and orange beads attached to a small handheld rake, whose handle is also decorated with beads.

Other standout multimedia works include “Edison’s Bright Idea,” a portrait of the scientist made with Lego bricks by JD Keller, a land surveyor for the Ohio Department of Transportation; and “Pop Star Who Sold Her Soul,” a funky, all-gold sculpture of a woman’s torso that includes handcuffs, a bustier made of vinyl records, a microphone and a mesh skirt. The artist is Janus Koziuk, who goes by the name Glamazon Jayne, and she is a tax examiner agent in the Ohio Department of Taxation.

Among more quietly impressive works are the nicely executed ink-and-watercolor “Old City Hall Doorway” by Barb Dysart, an Ohio Department of Health clerk; and the watercolor landscape “Quiet Winter” by Bruce H. Hull III, an electronic design specialist with the Ohio Department of Transportation.

The exhibit also includes some craftlike pieces that don’t measure up to the quality of the fine-art pieces. Still, all of the works represent the interests, artistic eyes and voices of people who make time for creativity in addition to their 9-to-5 jobs.