
REVIEW | RIFFE GALLERY

Wrights' exploits inspire exhibit with lofty aims

Sunday, August 31, 2003

Christopher A. Yates

FOR THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Organized in response to the 100th anniversary of Orville and Wilbur Wright's invention of the airplane, "Imagining Flight" explores flight as artistic metaphor.

Refusing to simply illustrate aspects of aviation, the 12 Dayton-area artists represented offer broad interpretations of the theme. Curated by Kay Koeninger, director of the Dayton Visual Arts Center, the show seeks to demonstrate that "flight" is a creative state of mind.

Though thematically linked, the work is disparate. Walking through the exhibition, the viewer senses a visual awkwardness difficult to ignore. One problem is the inclusion of a wide variety of artists working in diverse mediums. Too much diversity dilutes the power of several pieces.

Another concern is that the show sometimes appears to be an advertisement for local institutions such as the Air Force Museum and the Dayton



Untitled (Origami Installation) by Yasue Sakaoka



Contemporary Dance Company.

Flash Video Flash Gordon Rocket Ship by Jud Yalkut

For most of the artists, the concept of flight is clearly incidental rather than central to their personal visions. One of the strongest pieces is Jud Yalkut's Flash Video Flash Gordon Rocket Ship. Functioning as a component of a video installation, the centrally located "rocket ship" sits between two wall-mounted, companion pieces — Flash Video I and Flash Crash Video. Embedded within the rocket are two video monitors running clips from the 1930s Flash Gordon sci-fi movie serials. With humor and an eye toward an ever-evolving perception of technology, Yalkut edits the video, adding special effects with implied commentary. As viewers examine the rocket, black-and-white video monitors display their motions on the two companion pieces. Ominously tilted, the images on the monitors suggest that Ming the Merciless might be watching. Another strong piece is Yasue Sakaoka's Untitled (Origami Installation). Consisting of six folded paper banners, the work suggests progressive movement. On a purely emotive level, this piece gracefully speaks to the exhibit's theme.

Diane Fitch's paintings of displaycase installations at the Air Force Museum are evocative and a bit ominous. To appreciate her work fully, one must consider the title of each piece. Though the subject seems innocuous, a title such as Gays in the Military makes the viewer consider larger societal issues.

Presenting aerial or rooftop views of Dayton, Jean Koeller's paintings offer unique city perspectives. She elevates the anonymous, making sites such as Junkyard I worthy of consideration. Though her imagery is strong, her technique is sometimes lacking. She uses a similar brush stroke throughout her work — regardless of spatial location or material form.

Ron Kaplan's reproductions of "noseart emblems" from WWII aircraft are historically interesting but far removed from context. Separated from actual aircraft, pieces such as Shoo Shoo Shoo Baby lose historic, cultural and personal meaning. In the form presented, they could hang on any "Americana" restaurant wall.

Though selected as the exhibition's signature piece, Katherine Kadish's Icarus is weak compared with her monotypes. Her color is confident and resolved in her prints. Aerial View 5 uses simple bands of color to imply aerial views and distant vistas.

Using images of birds and insects, Diane Stemper focuses on flight as instinct in her artist's books. Books such as Final Flight are compelling yet difficult to appreciate while encased. Her work

demands to be touched and considered.

Other works in the exhibition include quilts by Mary Borkowski and Anne Hubler, drawings by Ray Must, a performance by Will Davis and photographs by Andy Snow.

One hundred years ago, the Wright brothers made the age-old dream of flight a reality. That moment changed the world. Though we take jets and airplanes for granted, flight as a spiritual, physical and emotional journey remains a source of artistic vision.

- “Imagining Flight: Explorations by Dayton Artists” continues through Oct. 19 at the Riffe Gallery, 77 S. High St. Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Fridays, and noon to 4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Call 614-644-9624 or visit www.riffegallery.org.

Copyright © 2003, The Columbus Dispatch

Sounds abound

With myriad options,
revelers can sate other senses, too

OHIO
NEWS BUREAU INC.
CLEVELAND, OHIO 44115
216/241-0675

CENTERVILLE BELLBROOK
KETTERING, OH
W-CIRC. 2,843

MAY-21-2003

'Imagining Flight' now open at Dayton, Kettering locations

By Frank Gabrenya
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH



Hear all that buzzing and wailing and screeching and squawking and plucking and honking and banging and booming?

Ah, the sounds of summer. The noisiest season is under way, with indoor and outdoor events set to elevate decibel levels between now and Labor Day.

As always, the loudest sounds will be heard Downtown on July 3 — when fireworks celebrate the temporarily re-christened Red, White and Bicentennial Boom!

Plenty of other events, however, might challenge the patriotic pyrotechnics for sheer volume.

Consider the potential ground-shifting around Ohio Stadium when Metallica, Limp Bizkit, Linkin Park, the Deftones and Mudvayne — rock ensembles not prized for subtlety — shake the 'Shoe on July 19.

A new name couldn't change the reputation of Germain (nee Polaris) Amphitheater, the site for acts such as Poison, Skid Row, Pearl Jam, Peter Gabriel, Santana, Bon Jovi, Aerosmith, Kiss and Alabama, whose country roots can't disguise the size of its amps.

Like your noise packaged? The amphitheater will host Lollapalooza (including Incubus and Jane's Addiction), Brooks & Dunn's Neon Circus and Wild West Show, and the latest Ozzfest, headed by Ozzy Osbourne and Marilyn Manson — a program steeped in family values of one kind or another.

PromoWest Pavilion, Nationwide Arena and Value City Arena will have their share of eardrum threats, as will the Ohio State Fair, which, along with the usual midway cacophony, will present a concert slate ranging from Eddie Money and Bow Wow to the Glenn Miller Orchestra and (as mandated by state law) the Oak Ridge Boys.

Gentler music will emanate from parks around town through the Music in the Air series and on the lawn of Chemical Abstracts Service, where Picnic With the Pops, starring the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, will welcome Roberta Flack,

Sha Na Na, the Dukes of Dixieland and Big Bad Voodoo Daddy (a zoot-suited swing band, *not* a nickname for maestro Alessandro Siciliani).

Even the venerable Summer Movie Series at the Ohio

Theatre seems keyed to familiar sounds: What movie buff doesn't instantly recognize the pulsating theme from *Jaws*, the screeching violins of *Psycho*, the joyous splashing of *Singin' in the Rain* or the small-arms fire of *The Godfather*?

Even the film advertised as "silent" — Buster Keaton's *The Cameraman* — will be accom-

²¹⁹ Imagining Flight, an exhibition of works by Dayton artists exploring the concept of flight, opened May 12 at both the Dayton Visual Arts Center (DVAC) and Kettering Tower Lobby.

DVAC's handicapped accessible gallery is located in the lobby of 40 West Fourth Centre at Fourth and Ludlow Streets while Kettering Tower is at Second and Main Streets in downtown Dayton. A free brochure accompanies the exhibition.

Imagining Flight, curated by DVAC Executive Director Kay Koeninger, was inspired by the centennial of Orville and Wilbur Wright's achievement. The Wright Brothers had to

imagine flight before they could invent it. And that critical leap is what connects the Wright Brothers down through the century to the 12 contemporary artists, all from Dayton, in the exhibition.

The artists in Imagining Flight take highly personal approaches to the theme, employing a wide range of media and inspiration. The artists are: Mary Borkowski, fiber; Will Davis, performance;

Diane Fitch, painting; Anne Hubler, fiber; Katherine Kadish, painting; R o n Kaplan, painting; Jean Koeller, painting; Ray Must, drawing; Yasue Sakaoka, sculpture; Andy Snow, pho-

tography; Diane Stemper, book art; and Jud Yalkut, video installation.

Imagining Flight will remain on view at both venues through July 11. Gallery hours at DVAC are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturday. Hours at Kettering Tower are 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday.

At its conclusion in Dayton, Imagining Flight travels to Columbus where it will be on view at the Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery on Capital Square. The Riffe Gallery is in the Vern Riffe Center for Government and the Arts at 77 South High St. For more information, call 224-DVAC.

OHIO
NEWS BUREAU INC.
CLEVELAND, OHIO 44115
216/241-0675

COLUMBUS DISPATCH

COLUMBUS, OH

SUN-CIRC. 402,193

MAY-25-2003

panied by a robust soundtrack, provided by Clark Wilson on the Morton organ.

The prominent effect at the Wexner Center for the Arts, meanwhile, will resemble a macho grunt, as the film program screens a series of tough-guy movies starring cinematic hunks such as Clint Eastwood, Lee Marvin and Steve McQueen.

The cadences of Elizabethan couplets will spill out of Schiller Park, while Latin and jazz rhythms will compete along the Downtown riverfront with the sizzle of meat on a grill.

For outdoor lovers seeking relief from the urban din, Metro Parks events will showcase the sounds of nature: frogs, birds,

crickets. Expected to crash the party, of course, are the traditional summer predators — flies, bees, wasps, mosquitoes.

Works of art often don't make any noise, but they inspire the imagination: Hark to the rumble of the surf while viewing a George Bellows painting of the Maine seacoast at the Columbus Museum of Art. Listen to the roar of an airplane engine or a rocket liftoff while seeing a collection of flight-related art in the Riffe Gallery. And think of giggles and guffaws while visiting a two-part Ohio State University show honoring Ohio cartoonists.

All the summer sounds, though, might run second to

the sights promised by Cirque du Soleil, the international troupe that will bring its Eastern-themed spectacular, *Draculion* ("dragon and lion"), to a tent near Nationwide Arena for performances July 24 through Aug. 10.

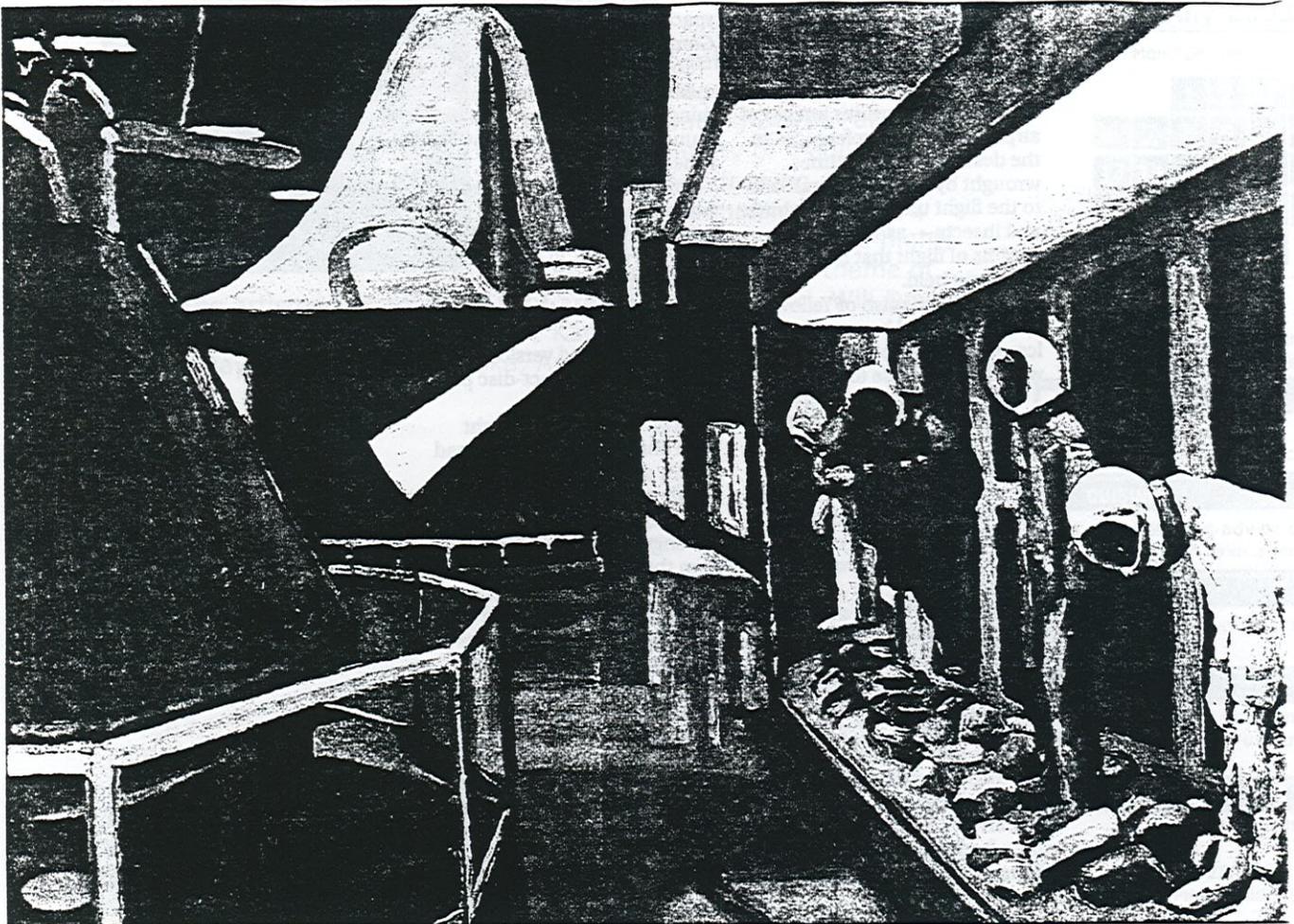
The intricate blend of acrobatics, ballet and physical stamina will prove once and for all that French entertainment doesn't end with mimes in whiteface walking against the wind.

Sample the wide range of summer choices in this section — and forgive the lack of audio accompaniment in keeping with the theme. Instead, try having someone read it aloud to you.

fgabrenya@dispatch.com

COLUMBUS DISPATCH
COLUMBUS, OH
AN-CIRC. 289,793

JUL-21-2003



Astronauts by Diane Fitch, from the exhibit "Imagining Flight: Explorations by Dayton Artists"

Lofty creations

Works capture dream
and reality of flight



Memphis Belle by Ron Kaplan



Icarus by Katherine Kadish

By Bill Mayr

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Imagination comes before creation.

That's true of inventors — and artists.

"Imagining Flight: Explorations by Dayton Artists" will bring to the Columbus area the centennial celebration of the Wright Brothers flights. The exhibition will open Thursday in the Riffe Gallery, run by the Ohio Arts Council.

Flight is taken seriously in Dayton.

The city has an abiding pride in the Wrights: The annual Dayton Air Show, which ended yesterday, is a big civic event; the massive Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, with about 22,000 workers, is one of the largest U.S. Air Force operations.

Such interest serves as a backdrop and jumping-off place for contemporary creations.

"Flight does play a role in Dayton-area art," said Kay Koeninger, who organized the show as

See **LOFTY** Page B6

► "Imagining Flight: Explorations by Dayton Artists" will open with a free reception from 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday and continue through Oct. 19 at the Riffe Gallery in the Riffe Center, 77 S. High St. Summer hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Fridays and noon to 4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Call 614-644-9624.

LOFTY

FROM PAGE B8

executive director of the Dayton Visual Arts Center. "It's not airplanes, per se, but the conception of flight."

The pieces by 12 artists cover the gamut of art forms — paintings, sculptural works, books, fiber, audio and video.

"I defined the theme very loosely because I think that makes it a more interesting show," Koeninger said.

The exhibit features images of airplanes but also references to the destruction sometimes wrought by military aircraft and to the flight undertaken by birds and insects — as well as the dreams of flight that humans have long held.

Katherine Kadish of Yellow Springs painted her version of Icarus, the mythological figure who flew too close to the sun.

"The Icarus theme always just touched me so hard — the idea of that yearning that everyone has to see more, to explore more, to take chances," Kadish said. "I've had a lot of dreams about flight. I've always had them — dreams where my body is flying.

"Every time I fly in a plane, I always take a window seat and look down on the landscape."

Three of her paintings look like imaginary aerial views.

Yasue Sakaoka, a Columbus resident who teaches art in Dayton, might work in just the right medium for the show: She created an airy, soaring sculptural piece from paper — an image of flying birds or flying Wrights.

Meanwhile, Diane Fitch takes a more somber view in a series of paintings of the Air Force Museum.

The museum draws memories "from a recurring nightmare I had as a child during the Cuban missile crisis," said Fitch, an art professor at Wright State University.

The 6½-foot *Flash Video* by Jud Yalkut harks back to the space dreams of the 1930s *Flash Gordon* era.

To the video artist, flight means "the whole visionary thing — getting away from the mundane into the upper stratosphere of thought."

"Imagining Flight" includes a work that isn't visual.

Will Davis will perform *Escape From Earth*, his 20-minute spoken-word piece, at 6 p.m. Thursday, during the opening reception.

An abbreviated version will be offered on a compact-disc player in the gallery.

Davis works at the Wright State library, where he has read diaries and other writings by Orville and Wilbur Wright.

The archives also have recordings of airplane motors from their era.

"I guess flight begins with watching... a bird gliding over the countryside or the waves of an ocean — wings and wind and rhythm," Davis says on his recording.

Excerpts from the Wrights' writings are spoken; in the background, a primitive motor coughs and sputters to life, then picks up speed.

Imagination takes flight.
bmayr@dispatch.com

Ohio
So much to Discover!



Search Ohio

Discover Ohio Travel Club

My Travel Organizer

Press Room

Email Newsletter

Events Calendar | Monthly Contest | Free Publications | Postcards | Visitor Inform

EMAIL NEWSLETTER

Ohio Discover-eNews! Online Archive

[Return to Newsletter Story Listing](#)

- Ohio Arts & Culture -

Dayton Artists Take Flight Celebrating Centennial of Wright Brothers Achievement



Throughout Ohio, art takes flight this fall offering a delight for all tastes. An exhibit celebrating the centennial of Orville and Wilbur Wright's remarkable achievement will be on view at the Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery July 24 - October 19, 2003. Curated by Kay Koeninger, *Imagining Flight: Explorations by Dayton Artists* includes 39 works by 12 Dayton-area artists inspired by the concept of flight. An opening reception will be held on Thursday, July 24, from 6 - 8 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. The legacy of Dayton Wright Brothers is evident in the western Ohio city even today. As a result, the artists in the exhibition take highly personal approaches to the theme of flight, employing a wide range of inspiration and media, including painting, drawing, video, photography, bookmaking, fiber sculpture and performance.

Members Login:

Email Address:

Password:

Remember Me

[Log In](#)

Imagining Kites! Family Day at the Riffe Gallery takes place Sunday, September 28, 2003 from 2 - 4 p.m. Children of all ages and their parents are invited to let artistic expression soar to new heights as they create flyable kites. Imagining Flight artist Yasue Sakaoka will demonstrate three different types of kites - Origami, Delta and Tetrahedron. Celebrate the centennial of the Wright Brothers' flight and the art it has inspired by flying a masterpiece of your own. Materials will be provided. For more information call 614/644-9624 or visit www.riffegallery.org.

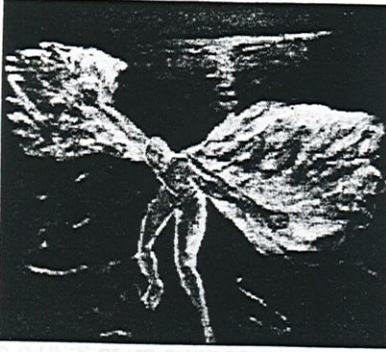


Exhibit: Imagining Flight

Imagining Flight celebrates the connotations of flight, in both fact and fiction. Eleven leading Dayton artists who work in a variety of media, including painting, drawing, video, photography, bookmaking, fiber art, sculpture and performance take highly personal approaches to the theme of

flight. The artists in *Imagining Flight* are: Mary Borkowski, Will Davis, Diane Fitch, Anne Hubler, Katherine Kadish, Ron Kaplan, Jean Koeller, Ray Must, Yasue Sakaoka, Andy Snow, Diane Stemper and Jud Yalkut.

Where?

Riffe Gallery

Vern Riffe Center for Government and the Arts

77 S. High St.

Columbus, OH 43215

614-644-9624

When?

Through October 19

Tu, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

W-Fr, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.

Sa, Noon-8 p.m.

Su, Noon-4 p.m.

More Entertainment

Dayton artists soar in "Imagining Flight" at Riffe Gallery

John Matuszak 219
Eastside Editor

One hundred years ago, the Wright Brothers invented flight with wood and metal and wires, but first the idea had to be born in the mind.

"They had to imagine flight before inventing flight," according to Kay Koeninger, curator of "Imagining Flight: Explorations by Dayton Artists," on display now through Oct. 19 at the Riffe Center Gallery in downtown Columbus.

In connection with the centennial of flight, Koeninger has found a fascination with the concept among 12 artists who work and teach in Dayton, a community steeped in the lore of aviation.

The 39 works on display reveal the universal hold the concept of flight has on the human psyche, from the ancient legend of Icarus, to flights of fancy in Flash Gordon serials, to the darker implications of dominating the skies.

Koeninger started organizing the exhibit three years ago with the question "Are Dayton artists influenced by flight?"

What she found is a colony of creative people in many mediums who have absorbed the legacy of the Wright Brothers, some overtly and others almost subconsciously.

Koeninger uncovered works relating to the theme that artists had never publicly displayed.

A signature piece of "Imagining Flight" is Katherine Kadish's large-scale canvas, "Icarus," depicting the Greek hero who fell to his death after flying too close to the sun with wings held together with wax.

For Koeninger, the painting "is a metaphor for human imperfection, for hubris, for trying to fly higher."

Kadish also created a series of abstract paintings of a birds-eye view of the landscape from an airplane.

Jan Koeller answers the question "what does a

bird see?" in a different way, and from a different vantage point - the windows of her studio overlooking the industrial section of Dayton.

Yasue Sakaoka's origami installation reminded Koeninger of a flock of flying birds.

Turns out this isn't what the artist had in mind at all. But the lightweight paper and bamboo construction is flexible enough to allow every viewer to draw their own conclusions.

In fact, every time Sakaoka puts up the sculpture, it is different, and can be trimmed to fit the space available.

Andy Snow's photo reproductions illustrate that there are many ways for people to leave their earthly boundaries, and to rise above prejudice.

Snow, a Columbus native, displays images from the Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, one of the premiere African-American dance troupes in the country.

Their energetic leaps show "how human beings can defy gravity," Koeninger pointed out. "And the only way to capture this is in photography."

Using computers, Snow has removed backgrounds, putting the dancers in a space "where there is no horizon, that is limitless," Koeninger noted.

Two of the images come from "On the Wings of Angels," an homage to the Tuskegee Army, the first black fighter squadron that defied bigotry and won acclaim during World War II.

Whimsical visions of flight are explored in video artist Jud Yalkut's installation inspired by the 1930's Flash Gordon movie serial, described as "cowboys and Indians with a lot of tin foil."

Yalkut replays distorted images from the serial within a silver rocket ship, commenting on our own distorted images of the future.

Hidden cameras within the gallery mean "you too can be in a Flash Gordon episode," Koeninger said.

Inspired by images from the 1940s, but with a melancholy edge, Ron Kaplan re-creates airplane fuselage art found on planes during World War II. Often these take the shape of pinup girls.

The originals were often painted by amateur artists entering combat.

"Young men facing death want a talisman," Koeninger said. "Often this turns out to be the ideal of a woman," a motif also seen on the mastheads of ships.

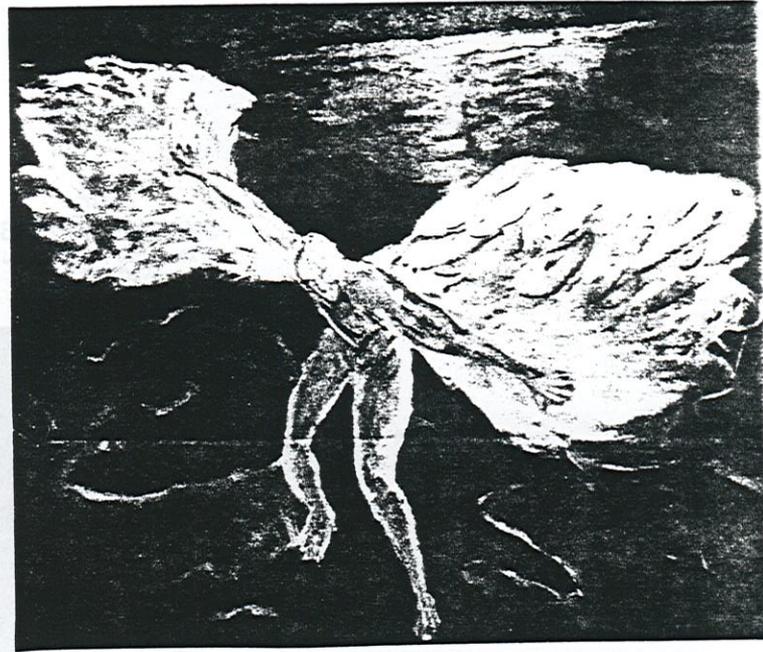
Flight and the shadow of destruction find their way into the prints of Ray Must.

Also from the World War II generation, Must fell in love with airplanes, and later became concerned about nuclear proliferation, Koeninger said.

Like many Dayton artists, Must has haunted the U.S. Air Force Museum, sketching its artifacts and taking his students the way Parisians gravitate to the Louvre.

One of Must's print, "Beginnings," juxtaposes a pioneer of flight with a group of men clustered around the shell of an atomic bomb.

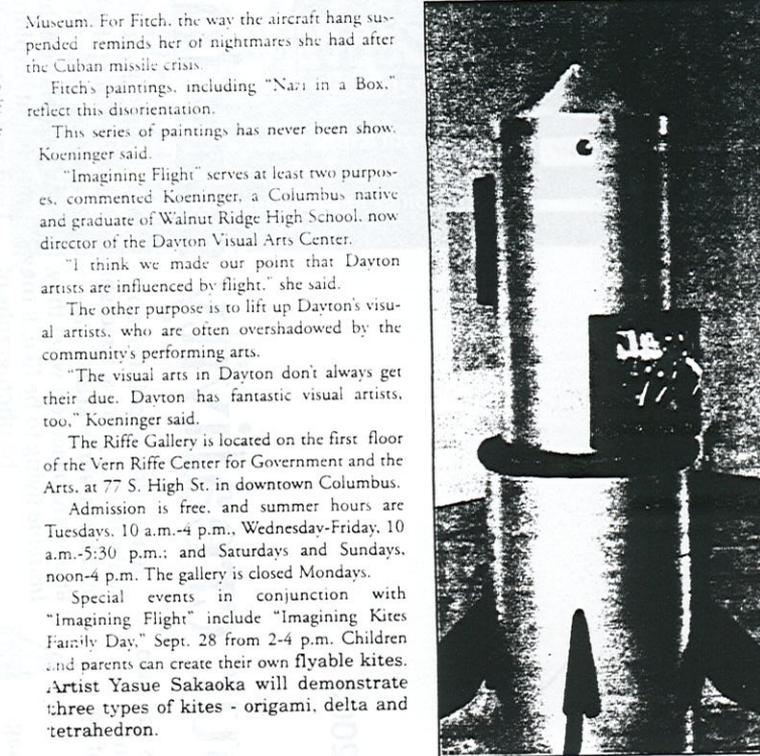
Diane Fitch also finds the sinister side of flight at the Air Force



Katherine Kadish's "Icarus," depicting the doomed flight of the Greek hero, is on display as part of "Imagining Flight," at the Riffe Center Gallery now through Oct. 19. The exhibit features Dayton area artists who have been influenced by the legacy of flight in their community.



Ron Kaplan uses the same materials found in the original planes to create fuselage art like the figures that decorated World War aircraft. Below, Video artist Jud Yalkut inserted distorted images of Flash Gordon serials into his rocket ship installation, while the screen at the rear captures footage of gallery visitors with hidden cameras.



OHIO
 NEWS BUREAU INC.
 CLEVELAND, OHIO 44115
 216 241-0675

EASTSIDE MESSENGER
 COLUMBUS, OH
 W-CIRC. 47,600

AUG-4-2003

AUG-27-2003

Let your creativity soar in kite workshop at gallery

219 One hundred years ago, two brothers from Dayton turned their dream of flying into a reality.

Orville and Wilbur Wright first had to imagine flight before they could build an airplane that would make it possible.

Artists are doing the same thing — imagining what they are going to create — before they actually create it. Because flight intrigues people, it's no surprise that artists are inspired by it.

Today, Dayton (75 miles west of Columbus) is home to a rich flight heritage because of the Wright brothers' legacy and the presence of the U.S. Air Force Museum and Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. As a result, artists from western Ohio often use flight themes in their work.

In addition to paintings or sculptures of planes, spaceships and birds, some artists' creations are based on what they *imagine* flying to be like. It may be photographs of dancers soaring through the air, a painting of how the Earth looks from miles above or even a poem or song about the meaning of flight.

One Ohio artist, Yasue Sakaoka, uses an art form called *origami* from her native Japan to conjure images of flight. *Origami* is a Japanese word that means to *fold (oru) paper (kami)*. Sakaoka's folded paper sculptures bring to mind a flock of graceful birds floating through the air.

Can you think of any other origami art that makes you think of flying?

How about kites? You can learn how to create origami

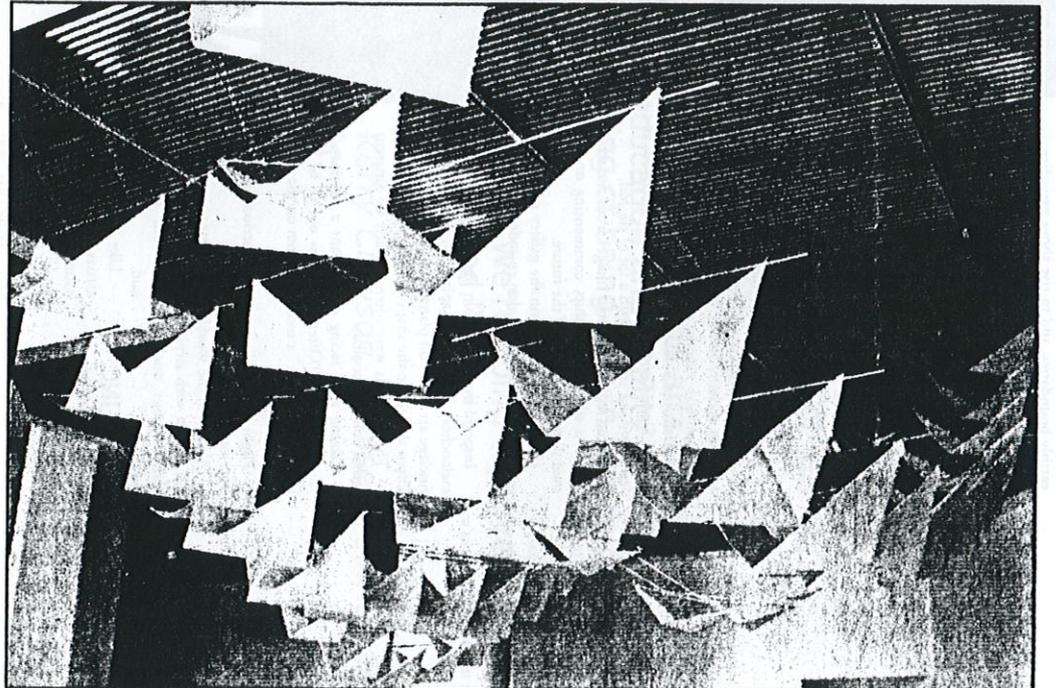
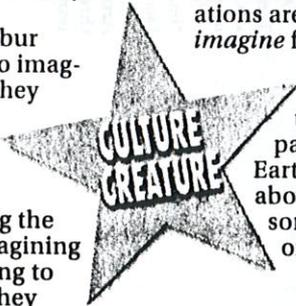
kites with Sakaoka at the Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery from 2 to 4 p.m. Sept. 28.

As part of the exhibit "Imagining Flight: Explorations by Dayton Artists," Sakaoka will teach children and their parents how to let their artistic expression soar. Working in child/parent teams, visitors will create flyable kites using traditional origami methods. Admission is free.

The Riffe Gallery is located in the Riffe Center, 77 S. High St., Downtown.

For more information on the exhibit, which runs through Oct. 19, call the Riffe Gallery at 614-644-9624 or visit www.riffe-gallery.org.

Sources: Information for Culture Creature was provided by the Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery, in cooperation with the Columbus Arts Marketing Association.



A work by Yasue Sakaoka on display in the Riffe Gallery.

COURTESY OF OHIO ARTS COUNCIL'S RIFFE GALLERY

The Columbus Dispatch

Lofty creations

Works capture dream and reality of flight

Monday, July 21, 2003

By Bill Mayr THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Imagination comes before creation. That's true of inventors — and artists. "Imagining Flight: Explorations by Dayton Artists" will bring to the Columbus area the centennial celebration of the Wright Brothers flights. The exhibition will open Thursday in the Riffe Gallery, run by the Ohio Arts Council. Flight is taken seriously in Dayton. The city has an abiding pride in the Wrights: The annual Dayton Air Show, which ended yesterday, is a big civic event; the massive Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, with about 22,000 workers, is one of the largest U.S. Air Force operations. Such interest serves as a backdrop and jumping-off place for contemporary creations. "Flight does play a role in Dayton-area art," said Kay Koeninger, who organized the show as executive director of the Dayton Visual Arts Center. "It's not airplanes, per se, but the conception of flight."

The pieces by 12 artists cover the gamut of art forms — paintings, sculptural works, books, fiber, audio and video.

"I defined the theme very loosely because I think that makes it a more interesting show," Koeninger said.

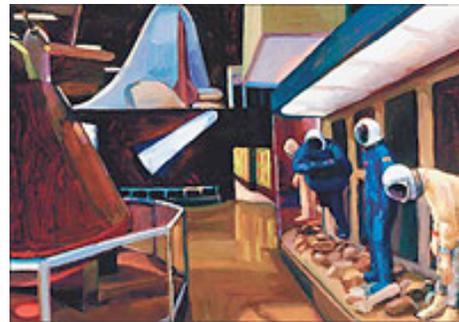
The exhibit features images of airplanes but also references to the destruction sometimes wrought by military aircraft and to the flight undertaken by birds and insects — as well as the dreams of flight that humans have long held.

Katherine Kadish of Yellow Springs painted her version of Icarus, the mythological figure who flew too close to the sun.

"The Icarus theme always just touched me so hard — the idea of that yearning that everyone has to see more, to explore more, to take chances," Kadish said. "I've had a lot of dreams about flight. I've always had them — dreams where my body is flying.



Memphis Belle by Ron Kaplan



Astronauts by Diane Fitch, from the exhibit "Imagining Flight: Explorations by Dayton Artists"



Icarus by Katherine Kadish

"Every time I fly in a plane, I always take a window seat and look down on the landscape."

Three of her paintings look like imaginary aerial views.

Yasue Sakaoka, a Columbus resident who teaches art in Dayton, might work in just the right medium for the show: She created an airy, soaring sculptural piece from paper — an image of flying birds or flying Wrights.

Meanwhile, Diane Fitch takes a more somber view in a series of paintings of the Air Force Museum.

The museum draws memories "from a recurring nightmare I had as a child during the Cuban missile crisis," said Fitch, an art professor at Wright State University.

The 6½-foot Flash Video by Jud Yalkut harks back to the space dreams of the 1930s Flash Gordon era.

To the video artist, flight means "the whole visionary thing — getting away from the mundane into the upper stratosphere of thought."

"Imagining Flight" includes a work that isn't visual.

Will Davis will perform *Escape From Earth*, his 20-minute spoken-word piece, at 6 p.m. Thursday, during the opening reception.

An abbreviated version will be offered on a compact-disc player in the gallery.

Davis works at the Wright State library, where he has read diaries and other writings by Orville and Wilbur Wright.

The archives also have recordings of airplane motors from their era.

"I guess flight begins with watching . . . a bird gliding over the countryside or the waves of an ocean — wings and wind and rhythm," Davis says on his recording.

Excerpts from the Wrights' writings are spoken; in the background, a primitive motor coughs and sputters to life, then picks up speed.

Imagination takes flight.

bmayr@dispatch.com

Let your creativity soar in kite workshop at gallery

Wednesday, August 27, 2003

One hundred years ago, two brothers from Dayton turned their dream of flying into a reality.

Orville and Wilbur Wright first had to imagine flight before they could build an airplane that would make it possible.

Artists are doing the same thing — imagining what they are going to create — before they actually create it. Because flight intrigues people, it's no surprise that artists are inspired by it.

Today, Dayton (75 miles west of Columbus) is home to a rich flight heritage because of the Wright brothers' legacy and the presence of the U.S. Air Force Museum and Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. As a result, artists from western Ohio often use flight themes in their work.

In addition to paintings or sculptures of planes, spaceships and birds, some artists' creations are based on what they imagine flying to be like. It may be photographs of dancers soaring through the air, a painting of how the Earth looks from miles above or even a poem or song about the meaning of flight. One Ohio artist, Yasue Sakaoka, uses an art form called origami from her native Japan to conjure images of flight. Origami is a Japanese word that means to fold (oru) paper (kami). Sakaoka's folded paper sculptures bring to mind a flock of graceful birds floating through the air.

Can you think of any other origami art that makes you think of flying?

How about kites? You can learn how to create origami kites with



COURTESY OF OHIO ARTS COUNCIL'S
RIFFE GALLERY

A work by Yasue Sakaoka on display in the Riffe Gallery.

Sakaoka at the Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery from 2 to 4 p.m.
Sept. 28.

As part of the exhibit "Imagining Flight: Explorations by Dayton Artists," Sakaoka will teach children and their parents how to let their artistic expression soar. Working in child/parent teams, visitors will create flyable kites using traditional origami methods. Admission is free.

The Riffe Gallery is located in the Riffe Center, 77 S. High St.,
Downtown.

For more information on the exhibit, which runs through Oct. 19,
call the Riffe Gallery at 614-644-9624 or visit www.riffegallery.org.

Sources: Information for Culture Creature was provided by the Ohio Arts Council's Riffe Gallery, in cooperation with the Columbus Arts Marketing Association.