



Jimmy Moreno and Mary Martin view works by Les Barta and Michael McAlister at the San Joaquin Delta College Art Gallery.

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The Record

ART DISPLAY

"Photoconstructions" and "Construction Zone: Assemblages"

When: Through Feb. 23

Where: L.H. Horton Jr. Gallery, San Joaquin Delta College

Information:
(209) 954-5507

See the sights

EXHIBIT OFFERS ARTISTS' SINGULAR VISIONS

By Paula Sheil
Record Staff Writer

Art is about seeing in a new way — around corners, sometimes, or with your eyes closed.

The latest exhibit at San Joaquin Delta College's Horton Gallery allows viewers an opportunity to understand how art is both internal and external.

The dual exhibit features Les Barta of Incline Village, Nev., and Michael McAlister of San Diego. Both men are masters of mindscapes, visions of the world reordered to suit their attitudes.

"These exhibitions examine the construction and deconstruction of design through the manipulation of imagery and materials," gallery director William F. Wilson II said.

McAlister's work — model constructions featuring lots of little macabre parts, such as taxidermied mice and bird



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Les Barta's "Sunflowers."

upon his environment create surreal visions of worlds that seem alien, like looking through a bee's eye.

Barta, 58, is largely self-taught, though he studied liberal arts at Columbia College in New York. Once the stuff of cut and paste, Barta's collage work is aided by digital technology. His photographed images are sliced and diced and juxtaposed.

His concepts are inspired by the "Eastern philosophies of perception ... with alternate

world. My artwork is not about describing the world. It is about deciding the world.

That attitude is best explained in his piece, "Frank Synthesis," where he executes the opposite concept embodied by architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright is known for blending his structures into the landscape. Barta blends the landscape into the Wright-designed Marin County building. Instead of a structure nestled into golden hills and oaks, the way Wright designed it, Barta uses the natural landscape as architectural elements in the building.

McAlister received his bachelor's of fine arts from California State University, Long Beach, and has shown extensively in California and nationally in juried exhibitions since the mid-'70s.

A self-described "regular guy" who wears a ball cap and a baseball jersey, McAlister



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Michael McAlister's mixed media assemblage "The Mortal Coil."

spikes and purple hair, happily bagging objects worthy of a Hieronymus Bosch painting.

Kind of creepy but beautiful, his mixed-media works incorporate wood, metal, bone and found objects. He calls 14 of these works "A Soul's Folly," drawing upon Bosch's devilish views of human foibles.

Each model, which remind the viewer of a Stephen King doll house, is full of humans, animals and objects expressing "foolhardiness and gullibility," McAlister said.

EXHIBITS

MANTECA

• **Delicato's Fine Art Show:** Through Feb. 4, at Delicato Vineyards, 12001 S. Highway 99, 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. daily. (209) 824-3505.

MOTHER LODE

• **Calaveras Arts Council Gallery:** "First Annual Winter Show," through Feb. 24. Hours: 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Friday and 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday. 22 Main St., San Andreas. (209) 754-1774.

• **The Vault:** "Art on a Grand Scale," through Feb. 28. Winter hours: 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. 42 S. Washington St. Sutter