

**PRESS RELEASE
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**“Pastorals and Portraits”
Duo Exhibition with Kevin Menck and Ken Pledger**

On Display from August 4 – August 31, 2011

M Gallery of Fine Art is pleased to present a duo exhibition featuring the work of Ken Pledger and Kevin Menck. The show, entitled “Pastorals and Portraits,” will hang from August 4 - August 31st. The opening reception will be held on Friday, August 5th, in tandem with the First Friday Art Walk.

Born and raised in Wadsworth, Ohio, Ken Pledger began studying with Jack Richard in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. He then studied with Robert Brackman for two summers before moving to Colorado. With age and experience has come a much looser approach to the application of paint, the “painterly approach” in essence. His latest body of work, which will appear in “Pastorals and Portraits,” will consist of over a dozen portraits and landscapes, and represents a move towards that painterly approach. The painting he is most proud of in the collection is “Janelle” for its “handling of paint and feeling of light.”

Kevin Menck was born and raised in middle Tennessee. In 2002, Kevin met local painter Jason Saunders, who was instrumental to his artistic development. Saunders introduced Menck to landscape painting and also instilled the importance of painting "en plein aire." “Pastorals and Portraits” will feature 15 landscapes by Menck, 98% of which were painted “en plein aire.” The paintings Menck is most proud of are those that represent a challenge. On one occasion, he was asked to point out just such a painting at an opening. At first glance, the painting appeared to be simple but to Menck it was a masterpiece.

“Close values, waning moody light, a certain feel that was very difficult to achieve. But after the dust settled I had nailed the look and feel of the landscape at that moment. Those are the ones I am most proud of. Those

paintings that make you feel like you have pushed through to another level in your development,” says Menck.

Both Kevin Menck and Ken Pledger have a background in illustration. Pledger received his degree in Illustration from Cooper School of Art. Menck graduated from The Harris School of Art and worked as a self-employed illustrator for 15 years. "Illustration for me was a huge asset, specifically for my understanding of drawing and the fundamentals," explains Menck. "When I started this, I could draw if nothing else, and when I see students and artists struggle with it I take it for granted that that was something I had when I stepped into this and it is the foundation to all of this. "

Both Menck and Pledger have a great love of the outdoors. Pledger moved to Colorado in 1980, where he took workshops with several artists such as Jim Wilcox, Howard Carr, Richard Schmid, and Len Chmiel. "To paint a good landscape, I always try and remember what it was that I liked about a particular scene. The wind blowing over the tops of the trees, a sunset, a feeling of calm. The ability to paint emotion seems almost unattainable," says Pledger. While in Colorado, Pledger spent much of the time in the mountains. Of his experience of the Colorado landscape, Pledger says: "I lived in Colorado for a very long time, and know the mountains well. The mountains are like nowhere else except maybe the ocean, and if one can have both that would be great." Pledger now lives in Nebraska with his wife Robyn, but hopes to return to Colorado with its majestic scenery.

Kevin Menck is an avid outdoorsman whose greatest inspiration is the local landscape. Of his source of inspiration Menck says, "It's being outside, afield, and walking and looking and listening. [It's] watching the sunset and sunrise, standing in a snowstorm, looking at a fresh cut hay field from thousands of different angles. It inspires me, and even with the creative energy and excitement ,it generates in me. There are just not enough hours in a day to see and paint it all." When Kevin is not outdoors, he spends his time with his wife, Karyn, and their two daughters, Mary Kathryn and Sarah Beth. He and his family live in Nashville, Tennessee.

This is the first duo show for both Menck and Pledger. Both are excited to see how their paintings will compliment each other and for the potential new perspective on their work.

All visitors are welcome!

**General Information: M Gallery of Fine Art SE, LLC 11 Broad Street,
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