

by *Brian* Reetz



PHOTOGRAPHY BY CYNTHIA ANN KLUCK



FIELD PATTERNS
Charles (Tim) Timken is a pastel artist from Lincoln. His work has never been represented by a gallery in Lincoln until now. At this time his abstract Nebraska landscapes, one style of paintings in his body of work, are being shown at So-Oh Fine Art.



JERUSALEM LAST RAYS
Yoram Gal lives in the Old Jaffa area of Jerusalem and has burst onto the art scene in the last year. An invitation to the Biennale Internazionale in Florence only started what would be amazing critical acclaim by world renowned art historian and critic who personally nominated Yoram for an award. So-Oh is thrilled to represent his work in the United States.

When people talk about the art scene in New York City, SoHo is usually one of the neighborhoods discussed. The area is home to dozens of art galleries and got its name from its location south of Houston Street.

Renee Johnson and Gail Erickson have brought some of that big-city feeling to their gallery, So-Oh Fine Art, located, you guessed it, south of "O" Street in Lincoln. But they've combined it with a down-to-earth atmosphere and Nebraska hospitality, so every visitor will feel welcome and comfortable. This is Nebraska, not New York, after all.

Location was key when Johnson went looking for a gallery space. It had to be near other galleries because being clustered in one area helps all of the galleries. It didn't take more than a week to find the perfect spot in the old Crowl's Kitchen building at 137 South 9th Street across from Mission Arts and down 9th Street from Noyes in the historic Haymarket district. The building's

brick-wall interior is rich in character and its divided spaces make great smaller galleries within the gallery.

Johnson has lived in Lincoln her entire adult life, selling real estate for more than a decade, before returning to school to earn a degree in marketing. Five years as executive director of the Community Services Fund followed, but it was her love of art and academic training that brought her to this next step in her career. Erickson, a lifelong artist, was brought in to provide her creative input.

After signing the lease and prior to opening in August 2005, Johnson and Erickson faced the challenge of finding the right artists to occupy the gallery's walls and floor space. The two spent the summer attending as many art shows as possible, even traveling to Europe, talking to artists whose works they admired. The gallery's artists range from great local and regional talents to those who are nationally and internationally known, and a big part of Johnson's job is finding new artists to spotlight each month for First Friday Gallery

Walks. In addition to paintings in all mediums, the gallery features the incredible wood turnings of Lincoln artist Steve Haack and the ceramics of James Kasper, who recently returned from Tokyo, where he was one of four U.S. artists invited to the International Ceramic Show. Also on display are the remarkable copper etchings of Larry Welo and the fascinating ink monotypes of Bathsheba Veghte. In addition, there is fabric and iron art, jewelry, sculpture and works in unusual mediums, such as selenium pieces.

Offering something in everyone's price range is a primary aim of the gallery. Johnson has a childhood memory of her parents buying their first piece of original artwork. It was a huge step for them and it made a lasting impression on her. She feels everyone should be able to experience the joy of owning original artwork for the sheer thrill of it and to enrich his or her life. A well-selected piece is something people can enjoy for years and years.

To round out the gallery experience, a gift shop features original art and some fun items for people looking for interesting, one-of-a-kind gifts. Visit So-Oh Fine Art and see for yourself that art is for everyone.

For more information, contact So-Oh Fine Art, 137 South 9th Street, 402-435-7664 or soohfineart@neb.rr.com. **LS.**



Linda Kelen



Bathsheba Veghte



Slim Hergert

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June's Featured Artist is Slim Hergert and July's Featured Artist is Charles "Tim" Timken