

WE ALL KNOW the big shows. The box-office bonanzas. The

blockbusters. The humongous draws. The killer attractions.

Most are linked with major museums, fabled names, huge budgets. Nobody can resist them. Often, they're touted by costly promotional campaigns that match their immense scale.

But what about the smaller, more specialized venues, with offerings tailored to particular purposes, interests, enthusiasms, populations?

We in Milwaukee are fortunate in having a wide range of such often-neglected gems.

Some are dedicated to the decorative arts, some to specialized aspects of history, some to the work of local artists. But all have a distinctive style and purpose.

Let's take a look at a few of these hidden treasures:

Alverno College, Gallery of Art & Cultures, 3401 S. 39th St. Specifically gauged to the college's accent on racial and cultural diversity, Alverno's gallery is strong on female and minority artists, with Third World concerns stressed. On view through Dec. 19: a juried student art exhibition. Call 382-6000.

America's Black Holocaust Museum, 2233 N. 4th St. Passion and documentation are equally balanced in this one-man showplace for the black experience in America. The museum's originator, James Cameron, once barely escaped being lynched. Now, he introduces visitors to the collection of black-history materials he has amassed. The museum presently is closed to the public but should be open again within the next 60 to 90 days. Call 444-1158.

Cardinal Stritch College, Frederick Layton Honor Gallery, 6801 N. Yates Road, Fox Point. Catholicity in its broadest sense characterizes the offerings of this neatly configured space, where shows of local and regional artists change monthly during the school year. Call 352-5400.

Charles Allis Art Museum, 1630 E. Royall Place. If you haven't encountered this Eschweiler-designed, Tudor-style mansion, once the home of philanthropists Charles and Sarah Allis, you're in for a treat. The Oriental collection, mainly Korean jades and Chinese porcelains, is unparalleled. At holiday time, the yuletide decorations are ravishing. On view through Jan. 17 in the upper galleries: travel photos by Wisconsin camera artist William F. Lemke. Call 278-8295.

Discovery World Museum of Science, Economics and Technology, 818 W. Wisconsin Ave. The name tells it all: an informative, entertaining port of call for students of all ages. Call 765-9966.

Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University. Curtis L. Carter, founding director of the Haggerty

Museum, systematically mounts what the opposition isn't showing. Through Feb. 28, he's featuring Old Master oils by 17th-century Dutch painter Leonaert Bramer, a virtual unknown (at least to us today) who specialized in historical, religious and mythological subject matter. It's an American premiere, well worth sampling. The permanent collection, featuring Salvador Dali's well-traveled "Madonna of Port Lligat," is the icing on the cake. Call 288-1669.

Jewish Community Center, Fishman Art Gallery, 6255 N. Santa

Monica Blvd., Whitefish Bay. The Fishman Gallery, a facility for the entire community, not just JCC members, is an integral part of the center's programs. On display through Thursday:

Dec. 10 Hebrew calligraphics by Cynthia Pearlman and fiber art by Toni Ettenheim. Gene Galazan, a visual-performance artist, will present a solo show, "From the Body," at 7:30 p.m. Thursday in the adjoining Ritz Theater/Soref Building. The show deals with Galazan's identity as a white, male Jew. Admission is \$5. Call 964-4444.

Kneeland-Walker House, 7406 Hillcrest Drive, Wauwatosa. To enter this spacious yet compact residence, home of the Wauwatosa Historical Society, is to experience living in a gentler, more expansive, less competitive era. Around the house are tree-sheltered grounds and, during summer months, flower gardens. The Firefly Art Fair, held each August, is a neighborhood tradition. Holiday decorations, inside and out, shouldn't be missed. The house is open from 1 to 6 p.m. today. Admission at the door is \$4 for adults, \$2 for students, free for children under 10. Call 774-8672.

Milwaukee County Historical Society, 910 N. 3rd St. Located in a former bank building, the Historical Society offers an ongoing glance into the bustling, wealthy, commercially minded Milwaukee of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Displays deal with everything from panorama painting by transplanted German scenic artists to shipping, banking and newspapering. Call 273-8288.

Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design, 273 E. Erie St. Newly relocated in a converted ferry terminal, MIAD maintains two spacious galleries. One plays host to changing shows, the other to the wide range of industrial products, from automobiles to railroad trains, given their distinctive look by Milwaukee native Brooks Stevens. In the Layton gallery through Dec. 23: an all-student exhibition. Call 276-7889.

Mount Mary College, 2900 N. Menomonee River Parkway. Take the elevator to the airy, inviting Marian Studio and you're likely to find an interesting cross-section of Wisconsin art. On tap through Dec. 13: neon sculpture by Al Blankschien, Tom Galbraith and Byron Skowronski. Call 256-1210.

Studio San Damiano, 3195 S. Superior St. Founded by Sister Thomasita Fessler, former chairman of the Cardinal Stritch College art department, Studio San Damiano reflects this energetic nun's lifelong belief that first-rate design affects every aspect of our lives, from painting and sculpture to flower arranging and interior decor. Now on view: 40 years of work by Sister Thomasita and her adult students. Coming Dec. 20: Christmas around the world, plus children's art. Call 481-7992.

UWM Art Museum. Three separate venues make up this

university-operated exhibition complex. The UWM Art Museum, 3253 N. Downer Ave., is showing the fragmented, cascading, semi-figural paintings of Japanese-American artist Michiko Itatani through Dec. 20. The UWM Art History Gallery, Room 154, Mitchell Hall, 3203 N. Downer Ave., is home to "An American in Munich: Drawings, Richard Andriessen," from the **Alfred Bader** collection, through Dec. 13. The UWM Fine Arts Gallery, in the Fine Arts Center, 2400 E. Kenwood Blvd., is housing work by graduating thesis students through Dec. 13. Call 229-5858.

Villa Terrace Decorative Arts Museum, 2220 N. Terrace Ave. Formerly known as Sobre Mar, this sprawling lakefront mansion shows how the upper crust lived during the Roaring Twenties. Villa Terrace, now owned by the county, is always beautifully decorated during the yuletide season, with toys, trees and ornaments in ample supply. On view Dec. 14 through Feb. 21: "Enlightening the Classics: 18th-Century Etchings of Roman Architecture" and "Lalique: A French Glass Master's Work from Milwaukee Collections." Call 271-3656.

Walker's Point Center for the Arts, 911 W. National Ave. This 5-year-old arts center, in the historical J.H. Burnham building, offers a three-tiered program: site-specific

installations, performance art, and children's classes. Curator and director Jane Brite has a knack for reaching out to her Hispanic neighbors, but she also brings in visual and dramatic events for cachet and controversy. Through Dec. 27, she's showing a bleak but pointed array of hand-cast wax skulls on beds of sand, a reflection of deadly urban social conditions, by Chicano artist Arturo Barrera. Also on hand: highly symbolic, heavily collaged paintings by the young American artist Stefan Schmidt. Call 672-2787.

Wisconsin Black Historical Society, 2620 W. Center St. An essential link to black America's past, the Black Historical Society is open to researchers and visitors. Call 372-7677.

Wisconsin Lutheran College, 8800 W. Blue Mound Road. A relative newcomer to the Milwaukee art scene, this modest but modern campus gallery is offering "Expressions," a group show of varied drawings by Florence Bloedel, Kara Beth Cuneo, Linea Day, Jean Dorn, Debra Heermans and others, through Saturday.

Dec. 12 Call 774-0311.

James Auer is a staff writer for The Journal

A Tudor-style mansion houses the Charles Allis Art Museum and its collection of Oriental jade and porcelain.

CITATION (TURABIAN STYLE)

AUER, JAMES. "A wealth of treasures awaits those who visit small museums, galleries." *The Milwaukee Journal*, December 6, 1992: 4. *NewsBank: Access World News - Historical and Current*.

<https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/0EB8275C38D8B13A>.