



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

This drawing of a giant southern magnolia tree on the grounds of the Tennessee residence is one of the most compelling pieces in the show.

# 'Far Hills: Images of the Tennessee Residence'

## Drawings and paintings of the governor's mansion in Nashville will be on display at Tanner-Hill Gallery

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ARTS WRITER

A traveling exhibit of 17 artworks, focusing on the mansion and grounds of the historic estate of Tennessee's governor, will open at Tanner-Hill Gallery on Tuesday, Jan. 31. Present for the opening reception that evening will be Tennessee's first lady Andrea Conte and artist Charles Brindley.

The show, "Far Hills: Images of the Tennessee Residence," is composed of four oil paintings and 13 graphite drawings that Mr. Brindley began in fall 2003. The images not only document the historic structure, but provide visitors with an inside look at its various rooms, furnishings and architectural details. Also included are depictions of landscape elements from the 10 acres on which the 1929 Georgian Colonial brick home stands.

"Far Hills," which is traveling to at least nine cities throughout Tennessee, is also part of Gov. Phil Bredesen's and the first lady's desire to renovate the residence using private funds. Years of water damage to the 76-year-old structure from a leaking roof and an old heating and cooling system have resulted in cracked walls and peeling paint. The electrical wiring system is unsafe and the original windows need to be replaced.



Charles Brindley's drawing of the southern facade of the governor's residence includes examples of architectural details.

Six of the artworks in the show were commissioned by Ms. Conte and the other 11 are available for purchase with half of the proceeds going toward the restoration project.

Mr. Brindley was selected as the artist for this project because of his artistic expertise and attention to detail. In fact, several years before the governor was elected to his current position, he and his wife had taken art lessons from

Mr. Brindley at Cheekwood.

"They are both quite good artists," he said.

Mr. Brindley spent hours on site making notes and pencil sketches to create the paintings and drawings in the exhibit. He feels that it is necessary to work from life to develop an emotional connection with his subject.

"Drawing directly from a subject has always been at the core of my work," he said. "It provides

a meditative refuge that allows opportunity to combine reference study and idea development."

One of the most challenging areas of the residence to reproduce was the foyer with its black-and-white marble floor, circular staircase and carved wrought-iron banister with a walnut rail.

Mr. Brindley is at his best, though, with his stunning drawing of a giant Southern magnolia tree that is on the grounds of the residence. This large-scale drawing illustrates the artist's facility for depicting various surface textures and creating dramatic compositions.

The exhibition will remain on display through Feb. 14.

"We are thrilled to have the art tour visit Tanner-Hill Gallery," said Angela Usery, gallery owner. "The exhibit does a wonderful job of illustrating an important part of Tennessee's history and we are proud to share this with the people of Southeast Tennessee."

A reception will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 31, at 5:30 p.m. Tickets are \$100. To purchase tickets or make a donation to the restoration project, call the office of the first lady at (615) 741-7846.

Tanner-Hill Gallery, 3069 S. Broad St., is open noon-5 p.m. Thursday and Friday and by appointment. For information, call 280-7182.