

# Preview

## Landscapes illuminated through Brindley's imagination

By Angela Wibking

Throughout their careers, artists often experiment with different styles, various media and an array of subject matter.

For Nashville painter Charles Brindley, however, realistically interpreting a natural world defined by trees, sky and rock outcroppings has had a hold on his imagination for as long as he can remember.

"Always," Brindley replies without hesitation, when asked how long he has been painting the haunting vistas of rocks, earth, sky and twisted trees that have become his signature. "I am a landscape painter exclusively."

Fifteen recent paintings by the Nashville-based artist are currently on view at Cheekwood, as part of the art museum's ongoing Temporary Contemporary exhibition series that shines the spotlight on regional artists.

Brindley's landscapes have a slightly disturbing, rather than soothing, quality to them that has been described as "eerie" and "broodingly romantic." Maybe it stems from the artist's fascination with trees, their branches often stripped of leaves, that seem to be reaching, embracing or clawing, at the sky. Or perhaps it is that his depictions of rock formations, isolated from all surrounding landscape elements except the sky, achieve an almost abstract look. Even in paintings that feature manmade elements like hedges, gates and garden stakes covered with vines, the emotional sense is one of the loneliness and melancholy of a winter sunset. There is an attraction but with a slight chill.

"I seem to find something positive and



The work of Nashville painter Charles Brindley will be on display through Sept. 29 at Cheekwood.

stimulates me to be immersed in things that are disappearing, to be in a South that is found in traces."

Brindley's paintings, which are created in oil on linen or canvas, begin as drawings from life. He finds inspiration outdoors near his Nashville home but also travels to the Savage Gulf area near Monteagle and the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia for ideas. Some of Brindley's preliminary sketches are included in the Cheekwood show to illustrate the artist's creative process.

Brindley calls the Cheekwood show a "prelude" to the major retrospective of his work, set for next fall at the Tennessee State

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**Charles Brindley  
Landscape painter**

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Museum.

"At age 41, I feel very honored for this interest in my work," he says. Brindley's work remains on view at Cheekwood through September 29. For information on hours and admission fees, call 356-8000.

### Art all over

There are a number of recently opened art exhibitions around town. Here are some of them:

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*See ART COMMUNITY, next page*