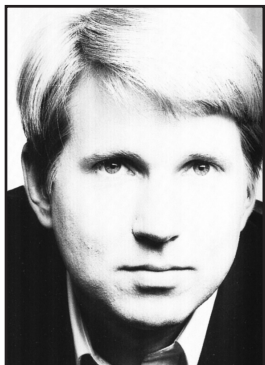


## Artist paints mood for our impressions

By KURT LOFT  
Tribune Art Critic

BELLEAIR — Charles Brindley's haunting landscapes do not tell a story.

No, his stark, moody scenes stand alone, removed from our dialogue. These dead trees on barren mounds, sunbaked rocks and broken fences fell



Charles Brindley

silent long ago. Their decay is implicit and complete, like a skeleton, like a bone.

Brindley, a technical prodigy obsessed by the Tennessee

wild, portrays the ruin of artificial structures under time's weight and the suffocation of nature by what the artist sees as man's arrogance.

His 30 works at the Florida Gulf Coast Art Center suggest romance without the slightest inkling of love. He avoids all popular imagery, all attempts to make nature a thing of beauty.

Plants, animals and earth are weathered and beaten until they collapse and disappear, and Brindley grabs the final moments.

Brindley does not depict the "Christina's World" of an Andrew Wyeth, an artist whom he seems to emulate, simply because there are no isolationist metaphors, no psychological mountains to climb.

### Art Review

#### SALIENT FEATURES

**What:** Exhibition of 30 works by Nashville artist Charles Brindley

**When:** Through Feb. 8

**Where:** Florida Gulf Coast Art Center, 222 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Belleair

**Hours:** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday; 2 to 5 p.m., Sunday

**Admission:** Free

His ideas concern form as an objective end in itself, and only the viewer, striving to find some meaning, brings emotion to the canvas.

Brindley possesses a formidable technique, which, considering its relationship to the canvas, hardly could be improved.

"Rock Form With Abyss and Oak Tree," a graphite from 1984, gains strength from the weight and density of its composition, and the freedom suggested in each eloquently phrased line of the tree. The atmospheric color play, the shade of black and white, form their own element of perspective.

Brindley's work has a strange and fascinating mix of principles developed by artists he undoubtedly admires. His style certainly complements Caspar David Friedrich, the 19th-century German romanticist whose eerie, striking forest scenes take on religious implications without being sacred. From Friedrich, Brindley expresses mood.

But two others come to mind. The artist evolves his mastery of light im-



Charles Brindley's work "Mound and Dolmen at Dusk" appears in the art center's show.

pressions from Monet, and from Mondrian he finds the necessary tools of linear construction and his relationship with the canvas's frame.

Almost any work by Brindley could be a scene from Poe or the mystic backdrop for a horror film.

All this provides a medium for our

own feelings. Brindley gives us a ruin that evokes some forgotten action or place, an edifice not quite pillaged by time. Something has endured, and Brindley, like a historian, leaves a document.

Better yet, these salient features are the spirit of nature itself.