

# HAW CONTEMPORARY GALLERY MARKS FIRST YEAR, ROLLING INTO YEAR TWO



BY KELLIE HOUX | Editor

Photos EG Schempf

Artist Corey Goering and sculpture



Peregrine Honig's *Studio Lamb*

**W**ith the turn of the calendar year, Bill Haw Jr. has found his stride at the Haw Contemporary Galley located in the Stockyards District. Dolphin owner John O'Brien stepped aside, but found his successor with Haw.

The anniversary is Aug. 1. "It's been an incredible year. The year exceeded expectations on every count. The arts community has opened its arms as has the general public." Haw says the real coup and threads of continuity are held together by longtime Dolphin gallerist Emily Eddins. She worked for 15 years at Dolphin. "It was a very smooth transition and so positive," she says.

Haw's family connections to the area are strong. His father is Bill Haw Sr., the owner of the Livestock Building and a figure well ensconced in the West Bottoms history and business world. Haw the younger spent much of his career in Japan where he worked in translation and interpretation after graduating from the University of Kansas. He returned to KU to receive a master's in Japanese studies. He founded Lexicon, a translation business in San Francisco. He returned to Japan where he eventually led the Japan location of Amazon.

"It felt natural to return," he explains. "I found the metropolitan area better than when I left. It has better restaurants and a great arts scene. I marveled at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts and the gallery scene." This time, he returned with a wife and two children. "I am glad that the children started their lives in Tokyo, but they also need to experience the Midwest. I really returned with an open mind. However, I can't take all the credit. The stars lined up and I really believe I am the lucky recipient of the hard work of John O'Brien. He was a genius with space and had such a vision and creativity."



Emily Eddins and Bill Haw

The stars continue to line up for the West Bottoms in general. The upsurge in approving the area includes Amigoni, an urban winery, and Voltaire, an upscale restaurant. "This is an area where we are all trying to bring in the right businesses and people down here. It is an area that has a great energy and in the next 10 years, I expect some incredible things."

As for Dolphin, Haw retained many of the artists that were represented by Dolphin. "It is about two-thirds from Dolphin and the others have been added over the past year." With the aesthetics intact, Haw continues showing artists in solo projects as well as a few group shows. "We have a commitment and a responsibility to a partnership with these artists. I want to make sure they have our loyalty and support and that street goes two ways. It's a collaborative spirit with lots of support and hopefully lots of sales."



One of Peregrine Honig's Selfie Paintings

A major lesson Haw learned this past year is that he really doesn't have to journey outside of the region to find artists. "I have learned that I am proud of our town. I don't really need to pull in people. I thought I might have to, but that is not necessary," he explains.

Now as he starts year two, Haw is examining whether he needs to participate in art fairs or look into satellite space in other Midwest towns such as Chicago and Nashville.

"I am at a stage in my career that I don't want to go halfway. I want to be positive and make a positive impact. I love being here every day. There is the technical aspects and as well as the grunt work and it is all fun. No matter what, we will never sacrifice the integrity."

Art ranges from \$500 to \$25,000. "John built something incredible over 20 years and it seemingly defies explanation. It's a great head start. Sure I will evaluate what we are doing." During the first year, Haw has presented eight opening dates. "We have offered simultaneous solo shows. As for the coming year, nothing is set in stone. We might try some experimental ideas, perhaps some young artist shows. Perhaps we might look at a Kansas City Art Institute show."

Haw Contemporary's philosophy of success can't be easily articulated, Haw says. "I want to support the artists, encourage



dialogue citywide and bring financial success for all of us. I want to see the city become like San Francisco or Tokyo.

With the second year underway, the late fall/early winter solo shows feature Peregrine Honig's show *Unicorn* and Corey Goering's *primal as I wanna be*. Both shows run Oct. 24 to Dec. 6. Goering's latest

collection of paintings and drawings are intense works on paper filled with anxiety and introspective wonder. This show marks his first ever solo exhibition.

For Honig, *Unicorn* is her first show with Haw and the first local in about 10 years. She is excited to take her seven large oil paintings and have them displayed in the museum-like setting of Haw. "There is something exciting and terrifying about sharing my works. They are some of my deepest thoughts. My art is the ability to make my thoughts into reality."

This exhibition will ask viewers to think about the latest trends of selfies. "My work is about permission to glorify the self. These donor selfies reference the rich history of patrons commissioning artists to paint them into elaborate and decadent settings. In Honig's collection each sitter has the power to produce, edit, and digitally publish their own image. It would be so great to know these works were in a home and pictures are taken of family members each year. It becomes living history. I would love to see a family grow up in front of the painting."

Like Haw, Eddins has a positive attitude toward the future. "It's our role to continue to represent regional artists and expand their presence with ours on the national level. John built up the clients and Bill is bringing in new clients through his connections. It's been a good first year."