



Who planted all these flowers?

Alma Gaul
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FIGGE JUST KEEPS GETTING BETTER: More and more, I find myself drawn to exhibits at the Figge Art Museum.

In June, artist Jean Shin's installation MAiZE — thousands of repurposed green plastic bottles crafted into cornstalk sculptures by volunteers — will form an elaborate maze on the third floor.

It's supposed to make you think about plastic waste, food choices and environmental stewardship.

Later in the month we get to see Chad Pregracke's "message in a bottle collection" — 40 bottles with messages inside that he has picked up during his cleanups on the Mississippi, Illinois and Ohio rivers.

At the end of September there will be an exhibition of Irma Rene Koen, an internationally exhibited American Impressionist from Rock Island. Her legacy was largely forgotten until art historian Cynthia Wiedemann Empen, of Rock Island, recently rediscovered her.

And, as announced in the Figge's summer newsletter, there's a blockbuster opening in October 2018: French Moderns: Monet to Matisse, 1850 to 1950. You won't have to go to Brooklyn to see these "even I have heard of them" artists.

"This exhibition will mark a milestone in the Figge's history, as it will bring works by some of the most beloved names in art history — Monet, Cezanne, Degas and many others — to the Quad-Cities," Figge director Tim Schiffer wrote in the newsletter.

CRISTIN TIERNEY

Finally, you have two more weeks to see the amazing installation "Ghost Light" by Chicago artist Jefferson Pinder that explores Quad-City African-American experiences, a first of its kind for the Figge.

It includes a stack of 16 TVs, a large-scale wooden sculpture, video projections, audio and, perhaps most striking, a replica of a barbershop chair and mirror, modeled after Joe's Barbershop on Harrison Street in Davenport.

It's up through June 4.

As Andrew Wallace, manager of collections and exhibitions, noted in an interview with Times reporter Amanda Hancock, viewing the piece may make you feel enriched, disturbed or more thoughtful.

And, once again, admission to the Figge will be free this summer, beginning Saturday, May 27, and continuing through Sunday, Sept. 3. This is thanks to support from the Bechtel Trusts and the John Deere Classic.

It's a great deal.