

## VISUALART | PREVIEW

# Inspiring 'Life Lived Large' at Folliard Gallery

BY PEGGY SUE DUNIGAN

Sometimes an artistic life inspires healing and redemption. These qualities permeate the work of Lon Michels in his exhibition at Tory Folliard Gallery, titled "Lon Michels: Life Lived Large."

Raised in Marquette, Wis., Michels moved to New York in his 20s. He became a Calvin Klein model and an assistant to renowned sculptor Louise Nevelson. However, in his early 40s, Michels suffered a retinal infection that caused complete blindness and derailed his artistic aspirations.

Two years later, Michels' vision returned. Overjoyed with his miraculous recovery, he returned to Wisconsin, in Lodi, to paint intricate, mosaic-like images and portraits overflowing with brilliant color, symbolism and patterns—as if any canvas was almost too small to contain his exuberant paintings.

Folliard's June 2 celebration features the unveiling of Michels' monumental painting *The Last Supper*. This homage to Leonardo da Vinci embraces the fact that cultures, genders, religions and races have more commonalities than differences.

Also scheduled for this evening, 4-5 p.m. at Next Act Theatre, will be a premiere documentary on Michels and the creation of his *The Last Supper*. Afterward, beginning at 5 p.m., Folliard Gallery hosts an opening reception for "Life Lived Large." The exhibition displays 10 grand paintings, including *Birth/Death*, along with numerous smaller images. A portion of the proceeds from any art sales will benefit After Breast Cancer Diagnosis and the Aids Resource Center of Wisconsin. Mark the date to meet Michels, a man who imagines great art and opens his generous heart to everyone around him.



Lon Michels, *Sunday Morning*, Acrylic on Canvas

## VISUALART | HAPPENINGS

### LES PAUL'S BIRTHDAY PARTY

#### Waukesha GuitarTown Weekend | Downtown Waukesha

Chosen by Gibson Guitar as one of only eight "GuitarTowns" in the world (a list that includes London, Los Angeles and Miami), Waukesha hosts related events June 1-2. The celebration features 10-foot-tall fiberglass Les Paul Gibson guitars created by juried artists such as Gene Evans, Bill Reid and Chuck Weber. These artworks will be displayed throughout downtown Waukesha. Other artists designed playable Les Paul guitars. These works will be auctioned off to benefit Waukesha arts programs. For more information on select events, visit [www.waukesha-guitartown.com](http://www.waukesha-guitartown.com).

### GRAND OPENING

#### Quartz Gallery | 2163 N. Farwell Ave.

Leo Purman, National Portfolio Gold Medalist from the 2012 Scholastic Inc. Art & Writing Awards, opens a gallery featuring work by Kindia du Plessis and Sawyer Purman. A reception begins at 6 p.m. on June 8. For more information, call 414-687-1386 or visit [www.quartzgallery.webs.com](http://www.quartzgallery.webs.com).