

# The Beverly REVIEW

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**Audrius Plioplys (right) credits his good friend Algimantas Kezys with helping him learn to balance medicine and art. Plioplys' art is now on exhibit through Nov. 30 in the Ciurlionis Gallery, Lithuanian Youth Center, 5620 S. Claremont Ave. (photo courtesy of Audrius Plioplys)**

## Artist's exhibit honors friend

by Pat Somers Cronin

From the moment my neighbor Audrius Plioplys ("call me Andy") dropped off an "invitation to a very unusual exhibit," I knew I was going to attend something special.

First of all, Plioplys is always interesting. His work as a doctor is neatly balanced with his tremendous artistic talent and his unending fascination with the way the brain works. In fact, the exhibit in the Ciurlionis Gallery of the Lithuanian Youth Center that he came over to discuss seemed to have several names: "Explorations of Thought" was one, also "The Brain: Deconstructed/Reconstructed," and maybe most important, "MindScapes: a Tribute to Algimantas Kezys."

And who is Kezys? A quote from the program notes explained the deep friendship between the two men.

"For 35 years I was struggling with medicine/neurology and my heart's passion, art. Algimantas Kezys had established himself as a professional fine arts photographer. We became friends. On many occasions he listened and counseled me. A workable path consolidating both

neurology and art was finally found.

"My first exhibits were in group shows that Algimantas organized at the Lithuanian Youth Center in Chicago. It was during exhibits of Algimantas' photographs at this center that the Art Institute of Chicago purchased his work and started their fine art photography collection!

"35 years later at that same center, I am putting on an art exhibit as a tribute to Algimantas Kezys. Full-circle, full-cycle. The title of the exhibit, 'MindScapes,' was borrowed from Algimantas' photo albums, 'CityScapes.' The show deals with deconstructing the brain and reconstructing it. My daughter, Ausrine, a high school senior—and also an artist—has been working with me on this project since May of this year."

Faithful followers and fans of Andy's were surprised to stroll through the various galleries and find parts of familiar scenes: who could forget a University of Chicago gargoyle on brilliant red? Or grey/white gothic script on bright green? Wait—are we slowly catching on? Is this exhibit really a selective distillation of all that

we have seen in other times and places: Rockefeller Chapel, perhaps? The Balzekas Museum? Flatfile Galleries?

In a brief but very informal talk on opening night, Plioplys explained that the wall-mounted art works are grouped in certain categories: Vision, Language, Movement and Rhythm, for example. Done in the six primary colors—for the six layers of the cortex—they are hung vertically because that is the way our brains store memories.

With Plioplys, artist and neurologist are never far apart. In fact, they always work compatibly together, which is one of the reasons we end up with a 32-foot-long wall-mounted exhibit that is not only exhilarating but, as Plioplys stressed, eco-friendly.

“Many artists feel it is mandatory to use materials that would have the least amount of environmental impact. This exhibit is ultra-green. All of the materials used, from painted canvases to mounting boards, are all from previous art works that I had created. The only material that needed to be purchased was the dry-mounting film. Please note

that I am totally discounting all of the sweat equity that went into these works, which actually was a tremendous amount.”

The pieces, wall-mounted installation works, are all 7 feet tall, and up to 32 feet long! Reconstructing the brain certainly takes a lot of space!

What I wish I had been party to was the very charming Ausrine and her creative father deciding which parts of which canvases to use. Because they are both artists, and because I have an artist daughter, I know there must have been some very long discussions.

There is nothing for me to do but return to the Youth Center and look for selections from some of my favorite canvases from other exhibits, “Thoughts of Valley Peacefulness,” “Summer Solstice” and “Creative Thoughts,” to mention just a few.

The exhibit runs through Friday, Nov. 30, in the Ciurlionis Gallery, Lithuanian Youth Center, first floor, 5620 S. Claremont Ave. Hours are noon to 7 p.m. daily, closed on Tuesday and Wednesday.

For more information, call (773) 778-7500.