

## In The News

# Exhibit explores comics behind pop art

If “Deconstructing Roy Lichtenstein,” David Barsalou’s current installation at Holyoke Community College, sounds more like the title of a graduate-level thesis than an art gallery exhibit, that is not too far off the mark.

Barsalou, a visual artist, researcher, writer and retired arts educator from Chicopee, started literally deconstructing the work of renowned pop artist Roy Lichtenstein in 1979 while completing his bachelor’s degree in fine arts at the Hartford Art School. He’s been working on that project ever since.

“Deconstructing Roy Lichtenstein” opened Oct. 10 in HCC’s Taber Art Gallery and is on exhibit through Nov. 23.

Barsalou’s large-scale digital prints present a comparative visual analysis between Lichtenstein’s paintings and the original source images Lichtenstein copied from 1960s comic books. In his artist’s statement, Barsalou says his exhibition “recognizes the numerous artists Lichtenstein swiped without giving proper credit or compensation.” He notes that Lichtenstein’s work is on

display at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, with no credit given to the original artists.

“While Roy Lichtenstein became rich and famous,” Barsalou says, “the original comic book artists he ripped off received nothing.”

Barsalou earned a bachelor’s degree in art education from Westfield State College before heading to Hartford, where he also received master’s degrees in art education and fine arts.

“Whamm! Blam! Lichtenstein

and the Art of Appropriation,” is an upcoming documentary by director James Hussey that features Barsalou’s research.

The Taber Art Gallery is open Monday through Thursday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. during regular school sessions. It is free and open to the public, on the second floor of the HCC Donahue Building, 303 Homestead Ave., Holyoke.

For more information, contact Amy Johnquest, director of the Taber Art Gallery, at 413-552-2614.



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David Barsalou’s exhibit “Deconstructing Roy Lichtenstein,” on display at Holyoke Community College, looks at the pop artist and the comic books that formed his source material.

*Submitted photo*