

# Artist finds his aerial view at LUMCON

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**COCODRIE -- The artist had always dreamed of painting the colors and contours of Louisiana's wetlands with a bird's eye view.**

**But that view only existed in Brooks Frederick's imagination until he discovered LUMCON's six-story observation tower, which rises above endless acres of remote Terrebonne Parish salt marsh.**



Photo by Matt Stamey

**Brooks Frederick has spent much of the month painting a panoramic landscape from his vantage point in the observation tower at the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium in Cocodrie.**

**Frederick traveled all the way from Brooklyn, N.Y., to paint the unique sight, but it was his Houma roots that inspired the project, he said.**

**"I grew up in Houma, and this is a project that I've had in my mind for a long time," Frederick said. "I wanted to give an homage to where I come from and also raise awareness of the region."**

**Frederick left Louisiana six years ago to study at the New York Academy of Art. He now teaches and paints at Brooklyn College and Adelphi University but travels to Louisiana often.**

**Frederick's interest in painting was sparked at age 19 when artist Dottie Billiu Hensche mentored him. She was the wife of the famous painter Henry Hensche, a resident of Gray.**

**"They both painted with impressionist color and style," he said. "That's where I got my start before I got into college."**

**He heard about the LUMCON tower from a friend who works at the research station.**

**"It was an amazing 360-degree view," he said. "At that altitude all the patterns of the marsh come out. Where else in the bayous are you going to find a six-story view but here?"**

**Frederick said he often paints outdoors, and that the LUMCON tower is a pretty ideal place to paint. Both artist and canvas are protected from the elements, but he is still afforded a spectacular view.**

**The only real obstacle Frederick encountered, he said, is a broken air-conditioning unit, which allows temperatures to climb to sweltering levels as the afternoon sun beats through the tower's windows.**

**For that reason, Frederick has added two fans to his arsenal of artist's tools.**

**"Some days are hotter than others," he said. "I'll leave early (in the afternoon) if it gets too hot, but it hasn't been so bad."**

**With permission from LUMCON officials, Frederick hikes up the observation tower stairs every morning about 6 a.m. He works an eight-hour day, taking advantage of as much of the morning and afternoon light as he can.**

**Frederick's work in progress is a 13-foot panoramic view of the Cocodrie marsh. He also does smaller paintings as inspiration strikes.**

**Frederick said he hopes to take the paintings back to New York to display in an upcoming show. He said he also hopes to enter the paintings in shows in Washington, D.C., to help raise awareness about south Louisiana.**

**You can watch Frederick work in the LUMCON tower until June 27, or view his art on the Internet at <http://www.brooksfrederick.com>.**