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THE GALLERY'S NEW SHOW

Jan. 13 - March 10

Reception: Jan. 16, 5:00 - 9:00 PM

Announcing!

This is the inaugural issue of RAG SHEET, a brief but informative monthly newsletter to be published by Riverfront Art Gallery.

The "Featured Artist", "Artistry Insights", and "Art Talk" columns will give you greater understanding of the artists and a better sense of what has gone into creating the art on exhibition. New members will be introduced, and shows, classes, talks, and tours by member artists will be listed, as will dates for gallery and downtown events. We hope, in this way, to enhance your art viewing experience and to make the gallery a source of pleasure for you and your guests.

Jerrie Jerné Morago and Lance Kuehne opened Riverfront Art Gallery in September, 2007. The gallery has twice made it to the top of the Bohemian's "Best of Sonoma County" list, quite an accomplishment right out of the starting gate.

The gallery's mission is to provide Sonoma County and it's visitors with quality art at reasonable prices and to provide local artists with a venue for exhibiting their work. Around 20 artists, displaying a variety of styles, media, and subjects, are on exhibition at the gallery. In addition to framed and matted works, Riverfront offers greeting cards and calendars by our artists.



An unstated goal of Riverfront Art Gallery is to help make true the slogan, "Petaluma is the fastest growing art destination in the Bay Area!" by continuing to be a notable art source not only for visitors to California but also for those nearer at hand who see the wine and cheese country as a weekend destination.

An opening reception celebrates each new show, where some of that wine and cheese is on hand. Do come nibble with us and discuss the works on view with some of the artists.

We are always delighted to see you!

FEATURED ARTIST: KAREN SPRATT

“Remembering Summer”

Karen Spratt’s art reveals an intelligent, humorous depth in her approach to her paintings. Their whimsicality draws appreciative smiles from viewers, such as with “*Three AM at the Louvre*” which depicts Venus de Milo and Mona Lisa sharing a glass of wine and chit chat about the day.

In explaining her style, Karen says, “I put myself in the surrealistic category. I paint things that look real but may not really exist. Contrast is something I do often in my paintings. I put natural objects next to man-made objects. For example, a giant ocean wave in a little teacup or a flower sitting in a chair. I like the juxtaposition. When we see them next to each other, the naturalness of the flower and the man-made-ness of the chair are more apparent.”



Chair Life

To aid the viewer in recognizing the incongruity or surreality within the image, Karen often draws upon classical works, because the subjects are familiar and, as viewers, we instantly realize that the figures are not in their accustomed context--the Hokusai wave in a teacup or bathtub, for instance.

As Featured Artist in January and February, Karen has put together a show entitled “Remembering Summer”, which features several individual flowers and other reminders of summertime. At first glance, this appears to be a departure from Karen’s usual approach, but she explains that it is in tune with her intent to juxtapose incongruous elements. “To recall the blooming warmth of summer in the cold, quiet of winter makes each season more intense.”



Mixed Bouquet 3

Yet the “Remembering Summer” flowers are a departure due to their isolation as the only object in the painting. “If I’m not careful, I can get buried in the details, shape, and form of an object. When painting from real life or a photograph, I have to sift through the visual information and choose what’s most important. Flowers can be overwhelming, so I decided to take them on one at a time.

“The flowers in the mixed bouquet collection were painted on matboard, because I was thinking of the project as just an exercise. When the flowers were finished, I had them photographed. I then continued playing with them, experimenting with varnishes and drying methods. What you see in “Remembering Summer” are giclée prints from the photographs. My exercise turned into a real project with some nice end results.”

As digital has taken over the world, so it has done with the art world--and not just in photography. Karen does her composing on the computer. Artists often sketched various versions of an idea, and old masters once painted full studies of works before doing the final piece. Computer programs like PhotoShop have changed that. Karen explains: “I collect pictures of objects I plan to use from photographs I have taken or from Internet resources. In PhotoShop I arrange the composition, cutting, pasting, and resizing until I have a composition I like.” Karen paints at her studio, computer by her side, so she can zoom in to check details or test a change she is considering without expending paint and canvas on testing revisions.

www.karenspratt.com

FEATURED ARTIST: WENDY G. FRANKLIN

“Just Around the Corner: Scenes of Petaluma”

Painter Wendy G. Franklin is an active and accomplished artist whose work has a local focus in her current featured show. Wendy's exhibit, “Just Around the Corner: Scenes of Petaluma,” combines her strong sense of the natural world and her keen eye for the commonplace in neighborhoods and street scenes.

Inspired by early California Impressionists such as William Wendt, Sam Hyde Harris, and Edgar Payne, Wendy seeks to capture the luminous, golden light on the landscape of her native state. Like her artist heroes, Franklin shares a reverence for the land and strives to create more than a visual record, striving for a poetic vision in her work. “I look for scenes that speak to me on an emotional level and make me stop in my tracks,” she says.

An avid student of her craft with a blu-collar approach, Franklin received her B.F.A. in Painting (magna cum laude) at the University of Oregon. She has continued to study with artists such as Ray Roberts, Skip Whitcomb, and Randall Sexton. And her childhood was ideal for discovering the landscapes she loves and developing her skills as an artist.



Belvedere II

“I had great parents who took me and my three siblings everywhere with them,” Wendy recalls. “We took camping trips all over the West: abalone-gathering trips along the California coast, hunting and trout fishing trips in the mountains, vacations to



Oaks and Eucs

Yosemite, Yellowstone, Teton, and Olympic National Parks. I was a kid who hated to be stuck indoors. I love finding out what's around the corner or over the mountain. It might be the next great scene for a painting! I got a great watercolor set for Christmas one year in about the 4th grade, and I have known since then that I wanted to be a painter.”

Her approach to painting is to work *en plein air*, a French expression that means “in the open air.” For Wendy, painting on site is essential. “Working in natural light is important to truly capture the colors in a scene and to be able to paint the air between objects in a landscape. The atmosphere and light in a scene shift so quickly, it's like being in a foot race. I have to get enough information down on the canvas before the scene becomes something completely different. Really, a painter has about two hours to catch the light in a scene. You have to develop a visual memory. I love being outside, chasing the light.”

Wendy also believes that her work—especially the local scenes—can heighten our appreciation of the bounty and beauty around us. “I think it is more important than ever to create images that capture the beauty of our neighborhoods, nearby farms, rivers, mountains, cool old buildings, and open spaces. Some have said that painting is dead. I don't think the people who have said that have ever set up an easel outside somewhere and painted what is before them. Every moment is different from the last, and beauty is a fleeting thing. How could painting be any more alive?”

www.wendyfranklin.com

**“BARGAIN ALLEY”
GIFT OPPORTUNITY**

The area next to the gallery’s back door now has an official name: “Bargain Alley.” The name is reminiscent of the small, old streets in out-of-the-way places where unexpected treasures often abound.

Bargain Alley is the place to pick up excellent “steals” when artists become short of storage space and need a bit of inventory reduction. The art in this area, both hanging and in the bins, is always discounted at least 40%.

Check the Alley often. You may just snap up that perfect gift or find a special treat for yourself.

WINTER HOURS

Wednesday, Thursday, Sunday
11:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Friday & Saturday
11:00 AM - 8:00 PM

Show Reception Evenings to 9:00 PM
Art Walk Reception Evenings to 8:00 PM

Closed Monday & Tuesdays

(Schedule changes in March)

**RIVERFRONT ARTISTS
AROUND TOWN**

The gallery assists local businesses with their decor by providing artwork to grace their walls. In January and February gallery members are at these venues:

CUCHINA PARADISO RESTUARANT

DE SCHMIRE RESTAURANT

JSOLAR

PLANET BEACH

MEMBER NEWS

Robert D. McFarland’s photography at East West Cafe, 128 N. Main St. in Sebastopol during January



“East African Crane”
Bob McFarland

Gus Feissel’s photography at Pomelo Restaurant, 1793 Church St. in San Francisco in January and February



“Desert Dwellers”, Gus Feissel

ART WALKS DISCOUNT

10% discount during Art Walk
receptions: 4:00-8:00 PM

Art Walks are on the
second Saturday monthly.