

**MAY, 2014**

**CALL FOR ENTRIES**

**FEATURED ARTIST  
BOB BENSON**

**FEATURED ARTIST  
KAREN SPRATT**

**PHOTOGRAPHY  
WORKSHOPS**

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**Gallery Offerings:**

**Paintings**

**Mixed Media**

**Photography**

**Photomontage**

**Sculpture**

**Woodcraft**

**Sculptural Lamps**

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[www.riverfrontartgallery.com](http://www.riverfrontartgallery.com)

(707) 775-4278

**THE GALLERY'S LATE SPRING SHOW**

**MAY 7 - JULY 5**

**SHOW OPENING RECEPTION AND ART WALK**

**SATURDAY, MAY 10, 5:00 - 9:00 PM**

Now that the stunning juried photography show is closing,  
we turn our attention to

**Riverfront Art Gallery's 5th Annual  
"Showin' On The River!"  
Juried Fine Art Show**

**HURRY, HURRY! DEADLINE SOON!**

Whether you use pen or brush, prefer pastels or conté stick, make monoprints or block prints, delight in realism or abstraction, work on paper, canvas, wood, or with fabrics, or combine several things into a fascinating mixed-media piece, you need to get that entry to Riverfront Art Gallery by the Saturday, May 24th deadline. Notice of acceptance will be sent by June 1st.

The show itself will be on exhibit for roughly two months, July 9th through September 7th. The show reception with nibbles, libations, and music is scheduled for Saturday, July 12th.

Submission Guidelines and the entry form are available on the gallery website: [www.riverfrontartgallery.com](http://www.riverfrontartgallery.com). At the bottom of the left-hand menu under Contact Us, click on Call for Entries. That link will take you to a highlighted link where you can download the entry documents.

**LET US SEE YOUR FINE WORK!  
GOOD LUCK!**



## FEATURED ARTIST: PAINTER ROBERT BENSON

### *Abundance - The Promise of Spring*

Featured Artist Robert Benson is drawn to still life subjects. His featured show, entitled *Abundance – The Promise of Spring*, will focus on his still life works in both watercolor on paper and acrylic on canvas. Smaller prints, as well as prints of originals already sold, will also be available.

Vibrant color, juicy fruit and wine, and splashy florals, all executed with his signature style of loose, bold applications of paint, reflect an inspired artist's enthusiasm for the abundant life we enjoy in Sonoma County.

The show will include Bob's series of "Feast" images which draw upon subjects long familiar from his daily life, including vintage tables made in California in the 30s. He explains, "This series utilizes patterns of fruit, cheese, bread, wine, flowers, and California Spanish Revival-era tile-top tables, combined in a swirl of color and texture that ultimately bring you back to a central focal point." The circles and curves, as well as the thoughtful composition, give a dynamic sense of life to these paintings.

Large canvas works like *Big and Juicy* and *Hollyhocks* command the space they hang in and provide a distinctive focal point for a room.

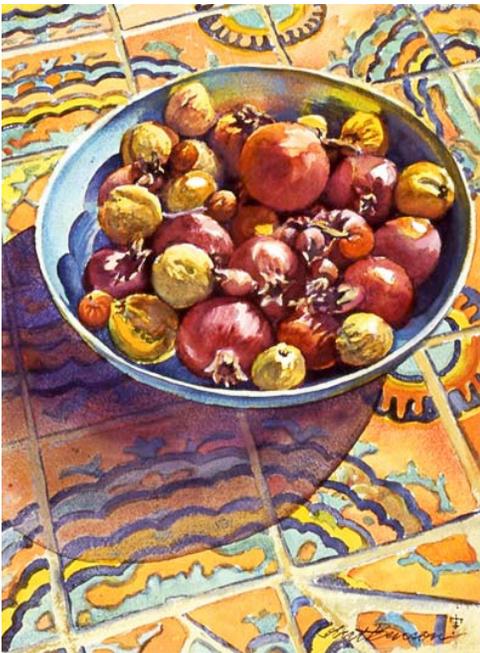


Left: *Fruit of Our Labor* Watercolor 22 x 28  
Right: *Feast for Carla* Watercolor print 22x28  
Below: *Big and Juicy* Acrylic 36 x 48



Interestingly, Bob found that after he had painted subjects at sizes that measure up to 3 by 4 feet, the physical motion of working large loosened up his approach to smaller pieces as well. However, whether large or small, Bob's work can exhibit a wonderful delicacy, as in the multiple greens in *Big and Juicy* and the variety of pinkish tints in *Hollyhocks*.

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*Pomegranate Party* Watercolor 28 x 22



*Heirloom Pumpkins* Watercolor 24 x 18



*Hollyhocks* Acrylic 36 x 24



**FEATURED ARTIST: PAINTER KAREN SPRATT**

***Flowers and Trees***



We all, artist or not, hate feeling vulnerable and inadequate to the task at hand. Most of us just try to hide such situations, but not our popular and well-regarded Petaluma painter, Karen Spratt. If an art show can have a moral, not just for the painter but for the viewer as well, then Karen's *Flowers and Trees* show does. Her persistence and effort in tackling a challenge have had lovely results.

Karen explains, "My painting style is often called 'tight,' which means, among other things, that I have a tendency to paint hard edges and include every little detail and nuance. Because of this I have always found landscapes intimidating. There are too many details. It's hard for me to sort through them and filter some out, so I paint each leaf and petal. I also have to admit that I'm not that interested in painting landscapes. There usually isn't enough *story* in them--and I don't like painting outside.

"But it has bothered me that trees and flowers scare me. So, over the years, I have slowly tried to take on these lovely subjects. Every tree I paint is a learning experience and a huge lesson in letting go, helping me to loosen up and let the viewer fill in the details, as with *Trees*. I said that landscapes don't have much story, but trees can be a part of all kinds of stories, like the various possibilities suggested by *Redwood Swing* with its sheltering tree. I like putting trees in my compositions."

How exactly does Karen simplify painting flowers? "With the flowers, I cut down on the details by taking them out of the landscape and painting them one at

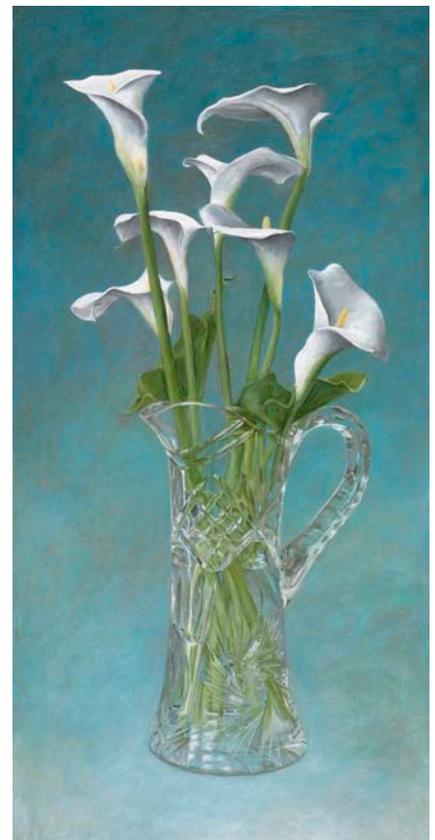
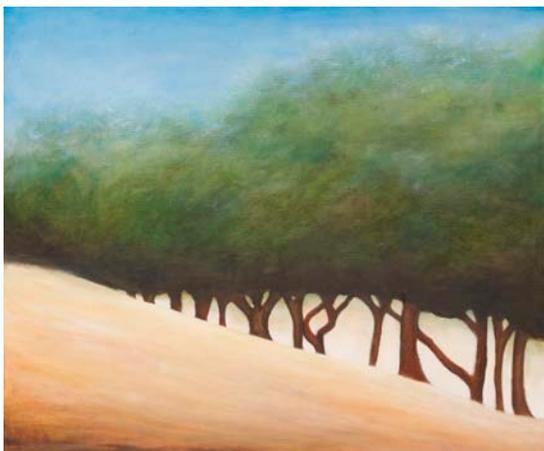
a time. Even that was difficult at first, but with each flower I'm learning to let the brush strokes speak for themselves."

With flowers becoming easier, Karen has found another challenge to conquer. "In a new painting of a paper white narcissus, I've been working on the little cut crystal dish. Another example is the crystal pitcher in *Suspended Beauty*. Surprisingly, the cut crystal is much harder than the flower. What I find interesting is that I have to do the opposite thing to paint the crystal as I do to paint the flower. I spoke about trying to filter out details when I paint flowers. With the crystal, I have to add as many details as I can. I use bigger brushes with flowers, so I can't get into the details. I paint the dish with my smallest, little brush."

As is absolutely clear in Karen's show, the challenge of painting with fewer details leads, if not to actual impressionistic pieces, then certainly to the elegance so often present in simplicity. Come and see her elegant work for yourself!

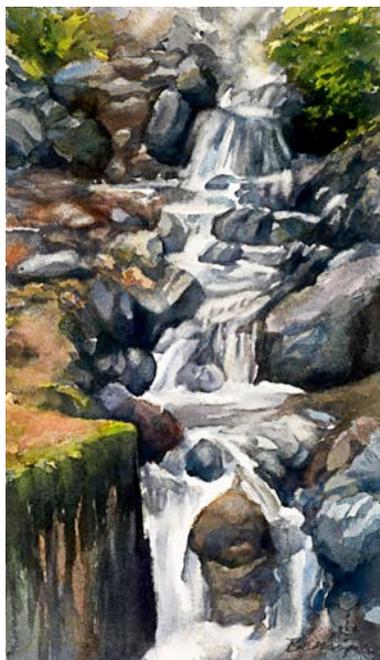
Heading left:  
*Ginkgo Leaves*  
Heading right:  
studio easel with  
narcissus piece

Below left: *Trees*  
Below center:  
*Redwood Swing*  
Right: *Suspended Beauty*



Featured Artist: Robert Benson, continued.

In the occasional landscape that populates the show, the focus is on the energy of the moment.



*Abundance of Falling Water* Watercolor 23 x 16

In *The Promise of Spring, #2* Bob contrasts the stark bare limbs of a walnut orchard and slate blue skies in early spring with the yellows of

*Abundance of Falling Water* is a waterfall study of which Bob says, “I painted with the thought of this piece hanging in your entryway, inviting good Feng Shui to your home or office. The loose execution and soft edges bring a sense of peace and calm to the viewer.”

wild mustard growing in the field beneath. It is a lovely, subtle work.



*The Promise of Spring #2* Watercolor 20 x 24

From the flair of *Hollyhocks* to the subtleties of *The Promise of Spring*, what is clear in Bob Benson's featured show on Abundance is the abundance of his talent. The show is bright and cheerful due to his ability to let the colors and scenes flow beautifully from his brush. If you can't make the opening reception on May 10, 5:00 to 9:00, then you will definitely want to pop in at some point for this visually uplifting show.

### LANCE KUEHNE PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS, MAY SCHEDULE

Riverfront co-owner Lance Kuehne offers half-day to multiple-day photography workshops. Find details and register at Lance's website: [lancekuehne.com](http://lancekuehne.com). Short workshops are listed first. Scroll down to find the weekend events. Below are examples of images you may come home with from the Spring in Wine Country session, 2 pm to sunset, May 3, and from the weekend in the Fort Bragg area, May 16 to 18.



Images photographed by Lance Kuehne.

