

THE HOLIDAYS

Guests Make Merry at The Art Studios Christmas Show

BY CHELSEY VORST
THE SACRAMENTO GAZETTE

It's no secret that Sacramento is brimming with small, independent art galleries and cooperatives. But one location, simply called The Art Studios, has actually been described as Sacramento's best kept secret, likely due to its semi-hidden nature.

The Art Studios is one of the city's oldest galleries and it is squirreled away behind the Easy On I restaurant. It is normally a place where a group of artists share an open creative space, but every Second Saturday, the studio opens its doors to the public and becomes a gallery where guests can view what the resident artists have been working on.

Last Saturday, The Art Studios hosted a special Christmas-themed show. Four art studios displayed the work of 16 artists. Throughout the show, attendees were able to sip beverages and enjoy snacks while browsing the collections.

The art on display at The Art Studios encompasses a wide range of mediums. Viewers can enjoy everything from traditional paintings to blown glass to hand-sculpted ceramics.

Many of resident artist Kathleen S. Farros' works are ceramic sculpture and bronze pieces with themes and subject matter encompassing fertility, Mother Nature, flora and fauna and juxtaposition of the plant and animal worlds.

"My work is humorous and thought-provoking, often with literal translations, executed in a surrealistic manner," explained Farros. "My intent is for viewers to embrace the art piece from a shared understanding of the human spirit or to create a dialogue. My work is from my personal journey, the good and also, the heart-wrenching experiences. Hopefully viewers leave with a thought or question and maybe a smile."

Farros created seven smaller drawings for the special holiday show, but overall she feels that her body of work fits in with the spirit of giving because when her art is viewed, the intent is to give viewers a laugh or a moment of reflection.

Farros is most proud of her bronze and soapstone sculptural piece titled "Juxtaposition of Corn and Fish." Created several years ago, she was inspired by the Native American practice of placing a fish in the soil to fertilize a planted seed.

"Why wouldn't the fish exist within the growing process?" said Farros. "I am still intrigued with the technical aspect of the piece, with the sculpting in wax and the patina applied. Primarily, I like the space it captures, the texture, and the concept portrayed."

Resident artist Emory Ensign's work is extremely intricate, meticulous and precise and he works mainly in pen and ink. He says he finds inspiration in

dark and imaginary elements and loves obsessively adding details to his illustrations.

While he didn't create any specific holiday-themed pieces for the show, Ensign says that his work is art that can stay up through all seasons. His most popular pieces depict a trio of alchemy cabinets with each shelf and cubbyhole containing endless amounts of details.

"Visitors to The Art Studios love talking to me about my alchemy cabinet pieces and asking

dios Christmas exhibition.

Overall, the Christmas show was inviting and welcoming and the diverse work on display demonstrated that Sacramento's creative community is thriving.

"One thing that I really like about the Sacramento art scene is how supportive and collaborative everyone is," Ensign said. "It's a feeling of a large family, supporting each other, encouraging people to push their boundaries and helping everyone grow. I would recommend people visit



Emory Ensign, a resident artist at The Art Studios, produces many pen and ink illustrations, which are highly detailed.

me questions about the themes," said Ensign. "They loving guessing on what it all means. I hide details in many different ways and when people recognize something and point it out, the smile on their faces make me very happy."

Elijah Pitts, Sondra Olson, Jane Burnside, Lori Franz, Paul Hancock, Yolanda Aubuchon and Terry Chunn are just a handful of the other artists whose work was on display at The Art Stu-

The Art Studios every second Saturday. If you like realistic paintings of historical Sacramento buildings, unique and beautiful hand blown glass pieces, hand sculpted ceramics, moody portraits or beautiful abstract paintings, our studio really does have it all. Visiting is always a fun time!"

Hours for The Art Studios vary, but it is open by appointment and for Second Saturday art walks.