

Inside The Artist's Studio



Artist Murray Sease outside her home/studio

Editor's Note: A few years ago we offered a look into a few artist's studios. It was interesting, but we got busy and I didn't have time to keep up with that feature. Murray Sease of La Petite Gallerie in Bluffton, SC, sent us a series of articles about her fellow gallery artists. This time it's about her studio.

The latest Studio Visit is a little tricky for me as I'm touring and writing about my own art-making space!

This place where I paint is my home which my husband Bill and I built ourselves almost 40 years ago. We were still kids in our early twenties back then. It sits on a quiet acre and a half, adjacent to the Victoria

In pretty weather I like to paint on the patio overlooking this garden, sometimes setting up still lifes on the white tile bar. These paintings most often depict fresh picked veggies and flowers, or produce straight from the farmer's market.

Moving inside to the actual studio / office space I have about 240 square feet split into two sections. One side features bookshelves, file cabinets, stacks of frames, and some large paintings awaiting gallery space to be displayed. The other half is my work space. My trusty Mac computer holds all the business side of selling art, 10,000 plus reference photos I've taken over the past 15 years, and is where I did most of my work as a graphic designer.



View inside Murray Sease's studio

Bluff Heritage Preserve in between Hilton Head Island and Bluffton, SC. It is as close to 'country' as you can get so close to those bustling towns nearby. On the property is a large woodworking shop and a wonderful chicken coop, abandoned for now, but once occupied by several generations of lovely egg-laying ladies. They were excellent models for my paintings as well! There is plenty of wildlife in my yard, and the remnants of one of the summer gardens make a nice backdrop. Only a few peppers remain of the vegetables but the marigolds and zinnias are still blooming in full force, keeping the bees and butterflies busy.

Working at ad agencies and design firms until my son was born, I was happy to be a freelance designer with the option to work from home for much of my career. Just a year ago I completely retired from that job and am now happily a full-time painter. I have two desks, a drafting table, and three easels so not a lot of floor space left.

I usually paint at my main easel with the natural light from the high windows behind me. My floor, rug and desks are dotted with gesso and paint. Even my computer screen is often splattered! My two dogs stay close by whenever I'm here at work. We have a continued above on next column to the right



Another view inside Sease's studio with one of her two dogs claiming space

kind of ballet of avoiding stepping on or tripping over each other in the small area. A challenge, but I love their company.

I have big windows in the studio and a set of glass French doors leading out to a deck with pots of flowers, a hammock and sitting area. There is a picnic sized table on the adjacent front porch deck where I often will do big or smelly projects such as staining frames and gessoing large painting surfaces.

Varnishing, which is a protective clear layer that I paint onto dry, finished pieces,

mates, and especially my husband Bill – he was a creative soul and delighted everyone with his photography, woodworking and metal sculpture creations. I am incredibly lucky to have had him, and all the other artistic inspirations in my life.

I've now visited all the studios of the six artist/owners of the cooperative La Petite Gallerie in Old Town Bluffton. If you've missed any of them you may visit (lapetitegallerie.com) and visit the 'gallery news' page for the past articles. It is so inter-



One of Sease's signature works

must be done indoors to keep dust to a minimum. When I prepare for a show or festival I usually have every surface in my home covered with paintings in various stages of varnishing and framing.

So you probably get the gist that my studio fills my entire living space inside and out. In all rooms and outside I also enjoy art created by my friends, family, gallery

esting to me to see how artists are inspired by their surroundings and find comfort to create in their studio spaces.

Submitted by Murray Sease, one of six artist/owners at La Petite Gallerie, located at 56 Calhoun Street, Bluffton, SC 29910. For further info visit (lapetitegallerie.com).

There are several more photos on Page 11 which go with this article.

So you're the Marketing Director of a visual arts organization, art museum, arts center, arts council or artist guild and you're wondering why you never see the exhibits presented at your facility included here. Maybe you're the owner of a commercial art gallery and you've never seen your exhibits included with others presented in your area. You might even be an individual artist who is having an exhibit in a non-profit space or commercial space and you don't see your exhibits included. My question to you is - How long will you put up with that before you ask someone, "Why that is the case?" If you're not included - it's your fault.