

Southern Highland Craft Guild in Asheville, NC, Offers Exhibition Focused on Members

The Southern Highland Craft Guild in Asheville, NC, will present *Magic is in the Air*, on view at the Folk Art Center's Focus Gallery, from May 1 through Aug. 3, 2021.

Located on the second level of the Folk Art Center, the exhibit will feature the work of five Guild Members: Cindy Billingsley, Sharon Gordon, Jane Cole, Jeanne Rhodes-Moen, and Lisa Besler. Disciplines represented are metalsmithing, rag-weaving, quilting, hand-built ceramics, and leather work.

The lively animal sculptures on display are created by Cindy Billingsley, member since 2004. When asked about the magic in her work, she states, "Art in itself is magic - the artist creates an illusion. What appears to be a dog, lion, or baby orangutan is really just a lump of clay. The artist's imagination made it so."



Work by Cindy Billingsley

The leather work in the exhibit is by one of the Guild's newest members, Lisa Besler (2019). She states "My work is an expression of creativity, love, and imagination. You can create almost anything



Work by Jeanne Rhodes-Moen

you want with two things: your imagination and the materials at hand - and that is magic."

Admission to the Folk Art Center is free. The Folk Art Center is located on the Blue Ridge Parkway in east Asheville. Headquarters to the Southern Highland Craft Guild, the Center also houses three galleries, a library, a craft shop and a Blue Ridge Parkway information desk and bookstore.

The Southern Highland Craft Guild is a non-profit, educational organization established in 1930 to cultivate the crafts and makers of the Southern Highlands for the purpose of shared resources, education, marketing and conservation. The Southern Highland Craft Guild is an authorized concessioner of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Center at 828/298-7928 or visit (www.southern-highlandguild.org).

Southern Highland Craft Guild in Asheville, NC, Offers Mini Pop-up Fair at Folk Art Center - May 8, 2021

The Southern Highland Craft Guild in Asheville, NC, will present its first-ever Mini Pop-up Fair, in the Center's Lower Level Parking Lot, May 8, 2021.

From 10am-4pm twenty booths will fill the parking lot featuring a variety of media crafted by members of the Guild. Disciplines represented include blade-smithing, glassblowing, wheel-thrown and hand-built ceramics, woodturning, metalsmithing, leatherwork, and furniture making.

In an attempt to provide a marketplace for artists recovering from a year of shop closures and cancelled fairs, the Fair Committee prompted the idea of the Mini Fair. Ruthie Cohen, the Board of Trustees Fair Representative states "Guild members will have an opportunity to share their creative efforts with the public outdoors in a carefully spaced layout. A limited number of tents will be sprouting up where cars normally park on the lower parking area. This Mini-Fair will hopefully prove to be a win-win situation. The public gets to see beautiful craft work in a fun, casual setting while the Guild members have an

opportunity to find new homes for their pieces."

Visitors are invited to shop for fine American Craft from 10am-4pm during the Mini Fair. Admission to this outdoor event and the Folk Art Center is free.

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Asheville Gallery of Art in Asheville, NC, Features Works by Bee Adams

The Asheville Gallery of Art in Asheville, NC, will present *Seeing in Color: Life on the Bright Side*, featuring works by Bee Adams, on view from May 1 - 31, 2021. A reception and artist talk will be held on May 7, from 5-8pm.

The exhibition features the vibrant acrylic paintings of gallery artist Bee Adams. Viewers can expect to see the colorful artwork Adams is known for, saturated with optimism and bursting with sunny hues.

Adams grew up in a home that celebrated and nurtured her artistic expression; her mother, grandmother, and aunt were all artists themselves. Adams calls Asheville home but spent a significant period of her adult art career in Colorado, inspired by the bold graphic mountains against the forever blue sky. While she started off creating very organic shapes and landscapes in her paintings, a move to Brussels, Belgium, added another layer of artistic inspiration as she fell in love with European architecture. The ornate,

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colorfully-roofed buildings all nestled together sparked an appreciation that would guide much of her later work. Surrounded by this muse, along with regular museum visits to view masterpieces by artists such as Vincent Van Gogh, Adams honed her unique style and color palette.

In *Seeing in Color: Life on the Bright Side*, Adams's whimsical spin on architectural paintings is showcased. "Buildings especially intrigue me and create a sense of place, community, and story," Adams says. "I become enchanted with a building, whether an iconic landmark or a simple barn, then once the dance of painting begins I really study the structure and shapes and the uniqueness of the building and have time to wonder at its purpose."



Work by Bee Adams

Asheville locals will recognize some familiar downtown landmarks that have been infused with energy and personality such as those illustrated in "Pack Square Jewels," which highlights iconic buildings like the new Asheville Art Museum presented in primary colors against the



Work by Bee Adams

backdrop of a lucid cerulean sky.

Adams's paintings have been exhibited in group and solo shows throughout the United States and Belgium and included in collections worldwide. Recently she had the honor of painting a custom commission by Auburn University for a treasured donor. Even with her extensive travels and exhibitions, Adams continues to approach her work with lightheartedness.

"I am a serious painter," she states, "but I don't create serious paintings. I give myself permission to have fun, to play." Her sense of humor is evident in *My Exotic 2020 Travels*, which features a well-loved armchair donned with a cozy throw and open book.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the gallery at 828/251-5796 or visit (www.ashevillegallery-of-art.com).

Blue Spiral 1 in Asheville, NC, Features Works by Deborah Squier

Blue Spiral 1 in Asheville, NC, will present *Bearing Witness*, featuring a solo show of works by Deborah Squier, on view in the gallery's Small Format Gallery, from May 7 through June 25, 2021.

"Painter Deborah Squier presents a new body of work focusing on landscape as a spiritual connection between the body and the earth. Each painting symbolizes a gesture of gratitude for what she refers to as Nature's life giving force," says Candace Reilly, Assistant Director Blue Spiral 1.

Squier offers the following about her work, "What motivates my painting is a passionate love and respect for the natural order of things...the mystery of life in all its manifestations. Growing up in New England I was constantly immersed in nature. As the youngest of four children, I accompanied my father regularly on plein air painting outings. While he wrestled with the elements on canvas, I dove headfirst into them. Along the Eastern seaboard I roamed among the elements, searching tidal caves and climbing the well defined planes of granite masses that were deposited by retreating glaciers. I delighted in savoring the natural world and was taught that this "stuff" was what life filters through and is the foundation of life regenerating itself."



Work by Deborah Squier

"Thus began my love affair with the earth's elements and I felt it in a personal and visceral way. I often wondered at the end of the day, spent from exhilaration, how anybody could ever capture the experience of the earth's offerings. This physical connection to the landscape was my apprenticeship and the real ground for the painting experience which I would take up later. Somewhere between the direct experience and the unknowable mystery is the source of my inspiration."

"I would refer to my style as a 'post-impressionism' although the label is not so important as deepening my direct experience or as gaining knowledge of the landscape and the earth forces that are at play in any subject I paint," adds Squier. "Nature is my



Work by Deborah Squier

most important Muse. I am her apprentice. I try to be present with all my senses."

"The painting process itself, then requires a lifetime of learning...learning about the subject matter, learning about the materials we use, learning about the light illuminating the landscape we stand in and learning how atmosphere changes day to day. It is this ongoing quest and thirst for the moment at hand that dazzles and confounds; this is why I paint."

Also on view at Blue Spiral 1 are several more exhibits including: in the Main Gallery, through June 25 is *Celebrating 30!* In celebration of the Blue Spiral 1's 30th Anniversary, they are tipping their hats to the many artists who have made the gallery one of the nation's most exciting venues for contemporary fine art and studio craft; on view in the Showcase Gallery, from May 7 - June 25, is *Isolating Mass: Zack Noble and Frank Hursh*. Sculptor, Zack Noble, joins Black Mountain College painter, Frank Hursh, in an exhibition exploring the emotive, nuanced interplay between line and shape; on view in the Conference Gallery, from May 7 - June 25, is *Judith Duff: International Wood Fire Artist, Peer, Mentor*. The exhibit features works by: Judith Duff, Jamey Biggs, Josh Copus, John Dix, Stephen Driver, Nancy Green, Dian Magie, Shozo Michikawa, Ron Myers, Akira Satake, Jason Serres, and Joy Tanner; and on view in the Old Showcase Gallery, from May 7 - June 25, is *Finding Nature*. Clay artists Deighton Abrams, Alice Ballard, Nina Kaware, Elaine Quave, Michael Vatalaro, Megan Wolfe, and Valerie Zimany present works which visually describe the way meaningful interactions with nature can make us feel whole.

For further information check our NC Commercial Gallery listings, call the gallery at 828/251-0202 or visit (www.bluespiral1.com).