

Bender Gallery in Asheville

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by National Book Award and Pulitzer Prize winning poet Mary Oliver who passed away earlier this year. Oliver's poetry focuses on the quiet of occurrences of nature. This poem is a description of animals in nature as well as Oliver herself, spending the day walking through fields. A grasshopper, with its complete attentiveness to the act of eating and just being, is an example to say: be fully attentive and focus on the things that you're doing in the moment and enjoy them; what else are you going to do with your life? It also serves to remind us as a society to appreciate the beauty of our planet and to take care of it before it is destroyed.

Varga's work has always been influenced by the environment and she focuses on the flora and landscape of the many places she has lived in or traveled to over the years. She has been to remote places untouched by man, from the high mountains in Europe to the far north of Norway. In recent years, escalating global warming prompted Varga to travel to Antarctica to find inspiration for a new body of work in order to raise awareness and contribute to the global climate conversation.

Varga's connection with the Australian coastline is possibly her greatest inspiration when creating her art. She loves the beaches where she lives and never ceases to be moved by the spectacular ocean and bush panorama offered by the spacious windows of her studio. The Great Barrier Reef influences and inspires much of Varga's work, especially the vibrant yet fragile coral gardens immersed in azure blue waters which are now threatened by coral bleaching and human impact. Many of Varga's works reflect lost flora landscapes which she recreates in their colorful glory as they are preserved in her memories.



Work by Emma Varga

Varga's sculptures consist of three dimensional images enveloped in layers of clear glass using a complex and laborious process that she has developed over the past twenty years. For each sculpture, Varga must cut hundreds, even thousands, of glass elements from clear and transparent



Work by Tom Starland

colored glass. She combines these elements with glass frit and stringers and fuses them together in stages; a process that takes two weeks to fire and cool. The final process of grinding and polishing takes another week before the sculpture is finally finished.

Emma Varga was born in Ada, in the former Yugoslavia. She graduated from the University of Applied Arts in Belgrade in 1975 with a major in glass design and ceramics. Following her graduation, Varga joined the emerging studio glass movement in Europe and participated in many landmark international glass exhibitions. While a freelance artist, Varga broadened her skills collaborating with a glass factory in Yugoslavia, creating sculptural glass and glass design. In 1995, she left Yugoslavia due to political unrest and immigrated to Sydney, Australia. By that time, Varga had become a highly skilled and accomplished artist.

Varga continues to push the limits of glass creating distinctive biomorphic sculptures with a unique and recognizable style. She participates in important international museum and gallery exhibitions and teaches around the world.

Bender Gallery is a contemporary fine art and sculpture gallery in Asheville, NC, representing both established and emerging artists. The gallery specializes in glass sculpture created by respected artists from around the world. The gallery's secondary focus is an expanding roster of figurative and abstract painters.

For further information check our NC Commercial Gallery listings, call the gallery at 828/505-8341 or e-mail to (Bernadette@bendergallery.com).

Caldwell Arts Council in Lenoir, NC, Features Works by Charlie Frye, Susan Frye, & Theresa Gloster

The Caldwell Arts Council in Lenoir, NC, is pleased to host an exhibition of folk art created by several local artists, including Charlie Frye, Susan Frye, and Theresa Gloster during the *Just Folk* exhibition, on view from June 7-29, 2019. A reception will be held on June 7, from 5-7pm.

Charlie and Susan Frye are the proprietors of Frye Art Studio and Folk Keeper Gallery & Antiques in Historic Downtown Lenoir. Charlie's focus is on creating great folk art, while Susan balances her time between creating art, curating antiques, and running the business side of the operation.

Theresa Gloster is a 'memory artist,' a self-taught painter whose works exuberantly chronicle her childhood years in the small African American community of Bushtown in Lenoir. Quoting an article by Glenn Hinson, Ph.D. (Professor, Public Folklore, Art of Ethnography at UNC Chapel Hill):

"As she paints, she finds herself caught up in reveries of memory, with sharply remembered moments from her past vying for expression."

"There's so much in my mind, that—it's like, you're trying just to get it out," Gloster says. When she chooses which moment to portray, she finds herself stepping into that

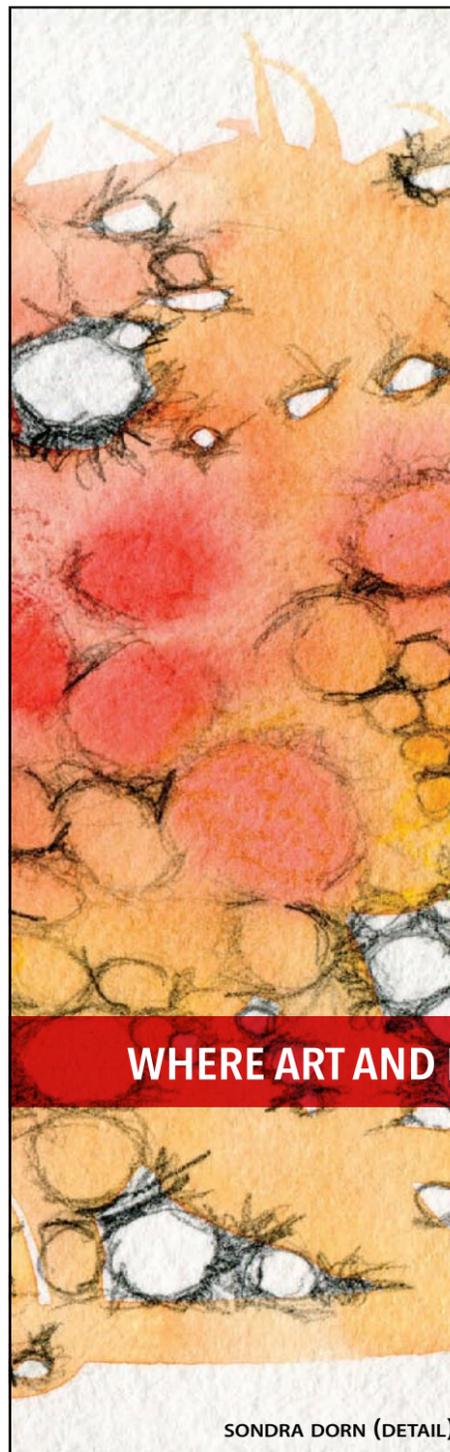


Work by Theresa Gloster

moment, inhabiting it with an intensity that never fails to surprise her.

"It's like, you can paint the whole picture in a few minutes," she muses. "But then you say, 'Now, I'm going to enjoy this picture. I'm going to go back in it. And then I'm going to take my time, and just work on it. . . . Because in your mind - you feel like your mind is going in there. And the only way that you can connect, is with the paintbrush, and your mind. So you feel like you're going into that painting.'"

For more info check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Council at 828/754-2486 or visit (www.caldwellarts.com).



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upstairs [artspace]

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The Art Cellar Gallery in Banner Elk, NC, Features Works by Robert Eoff and Judy Brater

The Art Cellar Gallery in Banner Elk, NC, is presenting *Through the Eyes of Robert Eoff* and *The Nature of Clay* by Judy Brater, on view through June 8, 2019.

The Art Cellar Gallery is excited to kick off the season with their first exhibition. This exhibition marks the beginning of many solo/group shows taking place this year. This first exhibition will showcase the watercolor paintings of artist Robert (Bob) Eoff and the delicate hand formed clay works of artist Judy Brater.

Originally from Memphis, TN, Eoff spent most of his adult career in broadcast television for The New York Times Company in New York City. He began painting in the early 1970's after being inspired by the work produced in an art colony in Memphis. Initially self taught, Eoff trained himself in the way of the brush and the flow of the colors. Eventually he took classes which led him away from his "colored water" paintings to the richly pigmented watercolors that he is creating today.

Through the Eyes of Robert Eoff will feature works that capture Eoff's views of the world around him. Focusing on local people, mountain vistas and places and of course fishing! The work of Eoff has been featured throughout the high country and the South. He is an associate member of the North Carolina and Florida Watercolor Societies as well as the American Watercolor Society and the National Watercolor Society.

Also a Tennessee native, Judy Brater grew up with art being an integral part of her daily life on her family's farm. Encouraged, inspired and energized by her grandmother, a painter and a quilter, as well as her mother who was also a quilter, Brater chose to pursue a career in the arts. Her thrown and hand formed clay work is altered while the clay is still wet to create unique shaping. Coils that look like twigs, hand embossed



Work by Robert Eoff

embellishments, birds and other local fauna decorate these nature inspired works. Just before the final firing, each piece is decorated with various hand-painted glazes. The result is a unique finished piece in bold and bright colors.

Many viewers are amazed with the detail and quality of work that Brater produces. *The Nature of Clay* will highlight Judy's most recent works which include several highly decorated and beautifully glazed canisters and large vessels as well as smaller works.

Together these two artists work will fill the gallery with bright, fun colors and welcome the viewer in to an intimate look at the world around us; from fish in a stream to the little yellow finch perched on a branch.

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