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Inside the artists' studios

BY FORREST HARTMAN • FORREST@RGJ.COM • SEPTEMBER 5, 2010

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Last year, Reno painter Melinda Plumbridge and a collection of other local artists launched the first Reno Open Studio Tour, a special event that allowed art lovers to meet and interact with artists in their working environment. Plumbridge said it was thrown together in about six weeks with a tiny budget, but the turnout was satisfying nonetheless.

"We were very, very pleased," she said. "All the artists did very, very well."

Seventy-five people visited Plumbridge's studio, she said, and she thinks other artists saw even more traffic.

"I'm on the very, very outskirts (of town)," she said. "The people closer in probably had over 100, which I think is exceptional."

That said, Plumbridge is predicting that attendance will at least double this year. With more time to plan, organizers have expanded Reno Open Studios from one day to three -- it runs Friday through Sept. 12 -- and they've nearly doubled the number of participating artists. In all, 38 painters, sculptors and other visual artists are preparing themselves to show off finished works, demonstrate their process and talk about what inspires them.

There's no charge for the tour. Attendees simply pick up a map with details on the location of participating studios and drive themselves wherever they like at their own pace. All studios involved will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. throughout the event, and the maps are available at a variety of local businesses, as well as online at www.renoopenstudios.com.

"We'll have fun with people," said Kai Prescher, a Reno sculptor who is sharing space with painter Ned Petersen.

Prescher, who also has worked as an elementary school teacher, said he loves to create art out of found objects, and he's pleased to talk about the things he makes.

Reno painter Marcia Neese didn't show off her work during the first Reno Open Studios, but she did attend. In fact, she visited with every artist and found the experience eye-opening.

"I was just blown away by the amount of talent in this town," she said. "I think (this year's event) will help not just put me on the map but a lot of these



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Kai Prescher created this bowl made from metal washers. Below, Prescher bends a rod that is part of a mobile he is working on. (RGJ)

OPEN STUDIOS EXHIBIT

Work by all artists participating in Reno Open Studios will be on exhibit at Sierra Arts Gallery through Thursday. The gallery is located at 17 S. Virginia St. and admission is free. Regular gallery hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Thursday, there will be a preview reception with some of the artists from 5 to 7 p.m.



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Marcia Neese attended last year's Reno Open Studio Tour and decided to be a part of it this year. (RGJ)

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

- » Ryan Adams, glass
- » Gini Campbell Anis, oil
- » Jenny Antonucci, pastels
- » Mike Callahan, oil
- » Amelia Currier, printmaking
- » Joe Donohue, wood turner
- » Robin Felt, pottery

artists that people are not familiar with."

Plumbridge said Open Studios is an artist-invitation-only event and a jury of two people decides to whom the organization will extend invitations.

"We want to keep the quality of the artists top notch," she said. "We want artists that are well-established and artists that have really made some success in their career."

Plumbridge said Open Studios, which recently merged with the long-running nonprofit group Artouring, also took care to go after artists who work in a variety of mediums.

"We wanted a mixture of artists this year, away from the traditional landscape painters like myself, and I tried to get some younger, edgier artists in," she said. "We've got a young artist who is a glass blower ... and we've actually got a forensic artist."

Many artists will have work for sale during Open Studios, but Plumbridge said visitors shouldn't feel like they have to buy something to take part.

"Our objective is not just to sell our work," she said. "It's also to educate the public on our process."

- » Lia Flores, calabaza/gourd
- » Norma Fowler, acrylic
- » Marla Gartrell, glass
- » Annie Hall, oil
- » Kathleen Hallamore, glass
- » Stephanie Hogen, photography
- » Erik Holland, acrylic/oil
- » Jan Horton, jewelry
- » Carol Johnson, watercolor
- » Barb Kallestad, watercolor
- » Wes Lee, oil
- » Toni Lowden, fiber
- » Diane McAllister, photography
- » Patty Melton, watercolor
- » Brett Moten, metal
- » Marcia Neese, oil
- » Carol Pallesen, calligraphy
- » Dale Pappas, pottery
- » Sally Pappas, pottery
- » Maria Partridge, acrylic/watercolor
- » Ned Petersen, oil
- » Melinda Plumbridge, acrylic
- » Kai Prescher, sculpture
- » Jann Selleck, handmade paper
- » Joan Shonnard, watercolor
- » Han Siig, jewelry
- » Penny Siig, forensic sculpture
- » Barbara Bell Smith, oil
- » Mike Smith, stone sculptor
- » Pat Wallis, oil
- » Linda Yaxley, jewelry

Note: Some Reno Open Studios literature indicates that painter Galina Milton is participating. She is no longer part of the event.

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Reno sculptor Kai Prescher bends a rod that is part of a mobile that he is working on at his southwest Reno home Wednesday Aug. 25, 2010. Marilyn Newton/RGJ (RGJ)

OPEN STUDIOS SELF-GUIDED ART TOUR

When: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Sept. 12
 Where: Various artists' studios in Reno, Sparks and Verdi
 Cost: Free
 To go: Download a map and brochure at www.renoopenstudios.com or pick up a map at area libraries or any of the following locations: Sierra Arts, 17 S. Virginia St.; Nevada Museum of Art, 160 W. Liberty St.; Nevada Fine Arts, 1301 S. Virginia St.; Eagle Frames & Art Gallery, 765 S. Virginia St.; Pathways Spirit, 323 E. Moana Lane; Lavender Ridge Farms, 7450 W. Fourth St.; Porky's Southwest Restaurant & Sports Bar, 3374 S. McCarran Blvd.; The Grill at Quail Corners, 6220 S. McCarran Blvd.; Aaron Brothers, 4809 Kietzke Lane; Bricks Restaurant, 1695 S. Virginia St.; Roundabout Bistro, Town Center in Somerset.

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