

# Artists go 'eye to eye' with nature, soul at Pacific Park

COOS BAY — Art created in nature and in the hearts of artists is exploding on the walls at Pacific Park Gallery. The artists' reception for "Experimentalist: The Inside Eye" and "Botanical Studies: A Bee's Eye View" is 2 to 4 p.m., Sunday, Aug. 14, at the gallery, 1957 Thompson Road in Coos Bay.

"Experimentalist: The Inside Eye" began as a workshop, "Experimental Painting," through the Coos Art Museum Education Department. It was the brainchild of retired art instructor Pat Snyder.

Snyder had a wish to enjoy art as he did when younger, with fewer inhibitions. He felt other artists might have the same feelings and thoughts about recapturing the spontaneity of creating. He designed a workshop for all levels of artists, beginning to experienced, inviting participants to expressly have fun and, in the process, expand their approaches to painting and drawing.

"Working with freedom and exploration requires escape from inhibitions," said Snyder. "The activities and challenges called for having fun with abstract art."



COURTESY PHOTOS

"Windswept" by Susan Lehman (above) and "Hot Summer Daze" by Paula Reis

New explorations forced working with art from the traditional descriptive and narrative art processes into the investigation, abstract expressive form. Each artist

had studio space to create and examine the non-objective abstract approach to art making. The open environments built a community of artists that supported exploration.

"While all the students were painting, the sound of creativity was deafeningly quiet," Snyder said.

Participating artists are Dana Gronemyer, Janne LaValle, Elaine Dunham, Nancy Price, Sally Rolichcheck, Susan Lehman, Geri Inokuchi, Rod Sullens, Arlene Roblan, Wendy Burger and Liz Spona.

Upstairs, in the Mezzanine Gallery, the season is celebrated as bees and Georgia O'Keefe can. With "Botanical Studies: A Bee's Eye View," photographer Paula Reis looks into the soul of the garden to share the incredible explosion of the colors and forms



of nature. She captures the flower as if it were a portrait, looking for the perfect pose and lighting to enhance the subject.

Many of her subjects are grown in her garden. She can study a species from year to year, photographing extensive studies under varied light sources, positions and color temperature. The stark backgrounds she chooses intensify the colors of the flowers allowing viewers to experience being awash in hues not visible to the naked eye.

Both exhibits blast color, movement, and expression from contradictory points of view: realism and abstract expression.

Pacific Park Gallery is located one block west of Bay Area Hospital in Coos Bay. For more information, contact [artistjanuary@gmail.com](mailto:artistjanuary@gmail.com).

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