

# EXTRAORDINARY PEOPLE

CATHERINE J. ROURKE  
For the Siuslaw News

## Fredric Michael Wood

Wood's art captures that fleeting moment of the dream state, transforming everyday sights into splendor and the mundane into the mystical. A brandy snifter gracing a bar top or a waitress mulling over the morning paper suddenly appear enchanting. One brush stroke reflects a magnificent ray of light on a seaside cliff while another renders a boat into a breathtaking sight.

"I've been drawing since I was a kid," he said. "Years of trial and error, observation and hard work taught me how to paint."

Born in San Francisco and raised in Europe until age 12, Wood moved frequently as the son of an Air Force officer. While stationed with his family in Ardente, France, Wood became enthralled with the picturesque landscape and a painting that evoked its magic.

"It was everything I experienced condensed into a frame," he said. "The realization that everything was a potential painting propelled me into the world of art."

Wood continued to paint after the family moved to Albuquerque and Kansas. Majoring in art at San Jose State University, he presented his first show and sold a painting.

"I just needed to paint," he said. "I wanted to learn art on an experiential level from painters I admired, not teachers in a classroom."

The cost of living in the 1960s meant Wood could rely on odd jobs to cover the \$15/month rent on his basement apartment. After a show at the Triton Museum of Art, his next break came when the Palo Alto Art Club hired him as a custodian for \$100/month with a rent-free garret, allowing more time to paint.

Wood spent three years there participating in art shows that provided the springboard for his acclaim.

"Today it's called 'artist in residence' instead of 'custodian,'" he said with a laugh. "I had fun but still had much to learn.



PHOTO BY CATHERINE ROURKE

Award-winning Impressionist artist Michael Wood, seen here in his self-portrait, teaches "Holistic Oil Painting" at the Florence Regional Arts Alliance. [Courtesy image]

Painting can get lost in the details. A painter must learn to edit just like a writer, to get to the point."

Wood's persistence paid off. After building a reputation through national exhibitions, he won a "Top 100 Award of Merit" at the Arts for the Parks Foundation annual show. Next, the prestigious Christopher Queen Galleries in California showcased his wildlife paintings, catapulting Wood into a successful career.

Drawn to the art community of Taos, N.M., Wood integrated the "Land of Enchantment" into

his painting. "Southwest Art Magazine" selected his work to grace the cover of its 30th anniversary issue in 2002. But, after two years, he missed one of his favorite subjects: the ocean. In 2004, Wood discovered Florence and decided to make it home.

"I love this city's artistic and environmental aspects and the friendly community," he said. "Florence has influenced my work, with its juxtaposition of light and dark and ocean landscapes."

Last year Wood received "Best in Oil Overall" in a "Plein

always a work in progress so that the next painting will surpass the last."

Woods' art reminds us that, despite the mediocrity and ugliness of life, it's still a beautiful world. Like a poem or a song, one painting can lift the corners of a mouth, light a candle in a heart, evoke a gasp of wonder or shed a tear, helping us to find the sublime in the mundane.

"The final touch in a painting is the most difficult one because there are often so many of them," he said. "Sometimes I call it 'PAIN-ting.' The creation of art is a process which lends pride to humility and humiliates pride."

View his paintings at [www.fmichaelwood.com/works](http://www.fmichaelwood.com/works) or at the Vardanian Gallery on Bay Street.

Air Magazine" competition. While his work still appears in prominent galleries, magazines and exhibitions around the country, Wood now teaches Holistic Oil Painting at the Florence Regional Arts Alliance.

"I have learned to trust intuition over intellect in art," he said. "In Holistic Painting, I teach students to get the mind out of the way and paint what they feel and allow their hearts to see."

What's next for Wood?

"I want my painting to support good causes like animal welfare," he said. "I also hope that my work will mimic nature's fluid poetic language. Art is

**RESERVE A**

## Night of Romance

*Valentine's Day*

Decadent Rack of Lamb drizzled with a cherry reduction sauce. Served with quinoa mushroom pilaf.

Reservations recommended

We also offer a world-class selection of wines, specialty cocktails and craft beers for your enjoyment.

**BRIDGEWATER**  
OCEAN FRESH FISH HOUSE  
*Zebra BAR*

1297 Bay Street  
Florence  
541-997-1133

[www.bridgewaterfishhouse.com](http://www.bridgewaterfishhouse.com)

### DENTURE SERVICES INC.

**LOCALLY OWNED AND OPERATED**  
Open 4 days a week!

Here to serve your denture needs:

- Dentures
- Partial Dentures
- Immediate Dentures
- Implant Dentures
- Relines & Repairs Same Day

**Monday-Thursday**  
**10am - 2 pm**

**524 Laurel St.**  
**541-997-6054**

**William Foster LD**  
Sherry, Office Manager

*"As a denture wearer myself, I can answer your questions and address your denture concerns."*  
~ William Foster, LD

Financing: Citi Health Card  
12 Month no Interest

### THE 2017 ROTARY AUCTION

**dancing stars**  
for the stars of tomorrow

Saturday, March 11, 5 p.m.  
Florence Events Center  
<http://theflorencerotary.org/>

TICKETS

\$65

Contact Craig Sanders for tickets:

Call 541.999.1713

email: [craig@hoaglandproperties.com](mailto:craig@hoaglandproperties.com)

Sponsored in part by:

Heceta Self Storge • Bill & Katie Prosser  
Hoberg's Auto Repair  
101 Things To Do Magazine  
Pat Riley & John Scott  
Larry & Deb Lamb  
Banner Bank • City of Florence  
Dale Edwards • Rodger & Carol Bennett

**Begins 5:00pm • Dinner 6:30 pm**  
**Live Auction 7:30 pm**

## We'll have a ball!

Rotary celebrates a world filled with possibility, raising funds for scholarships for Florence area youth and other community projects.

## DRIVER ED

**ODOT Approved**  
**Teen Driver Ed Course**  
**Begins February 16<sup>th</sup>**

Classes meet at Siuslaw High School

Contact Rob at (541) 999-9179 or [robgriffes@gmail.com](mailto:robgriffes@gmail.com)

Making Educated Low Risk Drivers

**R D E LLC**

**Rob's Driver Ed LLC**  
1211 20th St Florence, OR  
(541) 999-9179  
*Certified by the State of Oregon; Bonded and Insured*

Backstreet Gallery - The Place to Shop!  
*Unique Gifts for Every Occasion!*

A Local Artists Co-op

**1421 Bay Street, Old Town, Florence**

Exceptional, one of a kind gifts, handmade by local artists!

Cards, prints, and original art, photography, pottery, fused glass, night lights, scarves, felting, wood turning and carving, jewelry, books.

541-997-8980 [www.backstreetgallery.org](http://www.backstreetgallery.org)

CITY LIGHTS CINEMAS AND THE SIUSLAW NEWS PRESENT

# ACE IN THE HOLE

FEAT. NED HICKSON AND AN OPEN DISCUSSION ON FAKE NEWS

"ACE IN THE HOLE IS BILLY WILDER'S DEFINITIVE EXPRESSION OF HIS MASTER THEME OF VICE AS THE MOST RELIABLE AND TRUSTWORTHY GAUGE OF REALITY."  
- SLANT MAGAZINE

**SUNDAY, FEB 12**  
**3:00PM**