

GO! talent

Factor: Artists need community support

BY DAVID JASPER

The Bulletin

A community like Central Oregon must care for its artists, says fine artist Ian Factor.

Especially now, said Factor, who excels in portraiture and teaches art at Central Oregon Community College, as well as Bend Academy of Art, which he founded.

“The more help that artists can get in this really difficult time, in this really difficult community for artists, the better,” said Factor, the second artist to be featured in The Bulletin’s Central Oregon Creative Artists Relief Effort, or CO CARES. (To make a donation or apply for a grant, visit bendbulletin.com/talent/.)

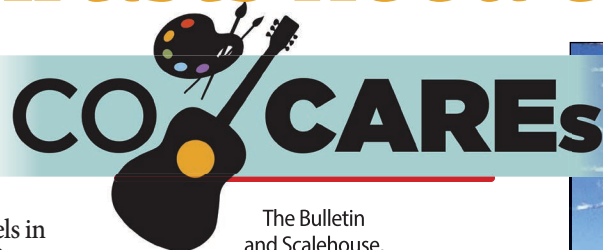
He also believes that the pandemic brings into sharp relief the need for community support of artists even when a pandemic has not impacted incomes for a year. As the cost of living increases in Bend, it pushes out artists who help create the town’s culture.

“If you have a community that is unaffordable for artists to live, you can’t expect to have an art community. Because that’s not how it works,” he said. “(Bend) is already such an expensive, growing — by leaps and bounds — community that is already unaffordable for the average artist.”

Whereas trendy, expensive places such as Williamsburg, a neighborhood in the New York borough of Brooklyn, already had a strong art foundation prior to gentrification, Bend has always been more about the mountains, outdoor activities and beer, in terms of its draw.

“There’s no core, real tight community” of artists here, he said. “I mean, there are tons of artists, but everybody’s dispersed, doing their own thing and just struggling to survive. And this was (true) even before COVID.”

Ideally, he would love to see subsidized live-work spaces, designed and engineered specifically for artists of all disciplines. And right now, with the double whammy



The Bulletin and Scalehouse, a collaborative for the arts, have joined together to raise donations to help Central Oregon’s creative artists — musicians, visual artists, performers and creative workers — by offering grants and a platform to bring attention to local amazing talent. This is a crowdfunding effort with a first-round fundraising goal of \$40,000. To make a tax-deductible donation or apply for a grant, go to bendbulletin.com/talent/.



Submitted photo

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« Ian Factor, artist, teacher

of growing costs of living and COVID-19, Bend risks losing the artistic community it has to more affordable places, Factor said.

“What happens is you get more and more money moving in, and the artists get pushed out, further and further and further away from these areas that they themselves made interesting and desirable,” he said. “The artists are there. Then they have little cafes open up, before you know it, there are little shows and galleries.”

Factor gets it. “They’re like, ‘This is really cool.’ People are drawn to that kind of energy, that life,” he said.

He’s seen the gentrification process firsthand in many of the cities in which he’s lived, worked and taught.

“I saw it in New York City, I saw it in Portland, Maine ... all these places I’ve lived. San Francisco,” he said. “The same pattern happens: The artists move

in because it’s an affordable place and they can get big space for cheap, and they create energy. They’re creating life. And that life — that’s the life force. That’s the magnetic life force that draws people to that community.”

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Courtesy Ian Factor

Bend artist Ian Factor in a 40-by-30-inch self-portrait in oil.

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