

# Experience Cannon Beach through the eyes of artists

## PleinAir & more art festival

By Eve Marx  
Cannon Beach Gazette

What’s more thrilling for any art lover than seeing artists doing what they do and on the beach? That’s the focus and the raison d’être for Cannon Beach Gallery Group’s Seventh Annual Plein Air & More Arts Festival. Scheduled for June 26-28, the event features artists represented by Cannon Beach’s renowned art galleries. Meander through town and along the beach to experience sculptors working in stone, creating clay forms that will eventually be cast in bronze, wood carvers (one who goes at it with a chain saw), ceramic artists (complete with a kiln on the beach) and metal workers.

The featured artists will be creating work on locations throughout town and on the beach, Friday, Saturday and Sunday; their work will be showcased in a group show at the Cannon Beach Chamber Building, which opens Friday morning, with new work continually added on as it is completed by the artists. A reception with light hors d’oeuvres and music takes place

at the Chamber on Saturday evening. All events take place rain or shine and are open to the public.

Kim Barnett, owner of Bronze Coast Gallery located 224 N. Hemlock Street, has been a CBGalleryGroup member for 15 years. He is, in fact, one of the group’s founders. “We hosted events from the beginning, but in 2008 a group of us got together to start this fledgling Plein Air event,” Barnett said. “It started small, as a one-day event. We invited artists associated with the participating galleries to produce work out of doors, but we were adamant it was not to be just a Plein Air event. We are one of the very few Plein Air events that encourage other kinds of media. The first couple of years we had a few artists in town painting and doing workshops; by the third year we were doing a group show, bringing in more artists; and now we host a group show with 40 to 50 artists.”

Barnett said three years ago, the festival was approached by Southwest Art magazine, one of the major publications in the art industry. “They wanted to be involved and offered to

present some awards,” he said. “That first year it was a small presentation; the next year larger; this year the magazine is coming not just to be supportive of the event, but to view the artists and the artwork and choose at their discretion mediums to award their own Best In Show prizes. That will take place at our Saturday reception group show at the Chamber.”

Barnett said more work will be brought in during the weekend of the show as it is being completed. “What’s happened is Plein Air & More has grown from a handful of artists painting on the beach to a group show with national representation, thanks to the involvement of Southwest Art magazine,” he said. “We’ve grown significantly in scale and scope.”

Allyn Cantor, owner of White Bird Gallery, and a painter of miniatures, said she became involved a few years after the original launch of the Plein Air event. “I got involved two or three years in,” Cantor said. “I remember when we received funding from the city to make it a three-day event. I was a part of that.”

Cantor said she is happy that year after year, many of the same artists keep coming back. She also loves that Plein Air & More firmly establishes Cannon Beach as an art town. “It’s not just a nature town,” Cantor said. “Our scenic beauty is legend, but you don’t often see artists painting or throwing pottery or carving or casting molds for bronze or welding on the beach.” She said it was fantastic for people to be able to experience art as its being created and to see what inspires the artists. “We have a Raku artist throwing ceramic pots and his wife, who is also an artist, is decorating the pots with natural leaves and things she finds on the beach. There will be an actual kiln on the beach.” She described the participating artists as “real troupers. In Plein Air, you have to be open to all weather conditions.”

Barnett spoke about the legacy of artists in Cannon Beach.

“Cannon Beach was a little fishing village,” he said. “Artists came and saw the beauty and stayed. Not just visual artists, either.” He said a gallery culture developed as a result of this. “Cannon Beach is now being compared to Carmel and other top art destinations. People come from all over the country, the world, to purchase art here.”

He said one of the beauties of the Plein Air & More event is that people who would never set foot in a gallery will be able to be outdoors to experience art happening and engage in conversation if they wish with the artists. “All appreciation comes

from education and exposure,” Barnett said. “In a beautiful environment, visitors can see the talent and the technique of the artist in a gentle setting. We find that anytime we can get the artist and the visitors together out of the sterility of the gallery, good things happen.”

Eeva Lantela, owner of DragonFire Gallery, said she appreciates the magic that happens for the artists working in Plein Air. “There’s a feeling of connection,” she said. “Part of the magic is that you are out in the environment and you feel the air and the wind, and you’re not painting from

a photograph, you’re getting the realness of the moment and conveying it in your medium.”

She said that in the history of Plein Air, the paint tube and folding easels and the advent of gesso primed canvas made it possible for artists to actually go outside and do their work. “The light is always changing,” Lantela said. “To get the whole sense of it, the work has to be fairly quick. Most Plein Air artists don’t actually finish their painting out of doors; there has to be some studio work to complete it, but the fact of having caught that moment, that’s what is magical.”



GEORGE VETTER PHOTO  
Artist Janis Ellison follows her muse, epitomizing the Plein Air movement in Cannon Beach.

## Northwest By Northwest Gallery

Throughout Cannon Beach artists paint and sculpt or create works of art at the Seventh Annual Plein Air & More Arts Festival June 26, 27 and 28. The event is covered by the prestigious Southwest Art Magazine.

Northwest by Northwest Gallery will feature leading Northwest artists, including Georgia Gerber, Ivan McLean, Jeff White, Hazel Schlesinger and Douglas Granum.

Georgia Gerber known for her sculptures in downtown Portland depicting Oregon wildlife. Gerber will be creating sculpture in clay in front of the gallery. She won the Public Choice Vote for her life-size “Colt and Turtle.”

Ivan McLean is a contemporary steel sculptor who has created numerous sculptures throughout the Pearl district. He has just returned from installing 6 spheres on Hollywood Boulevard across from Beverly Hills. He is known for his numerous site specific installations for the Nines Hotel in downtown Portland; large bronze sculpture, kiln formed glass

walls and wood installations throughout.

Jeff White is a master oil painter. He has been an Oregon Art Beat feature artist. His work can be seen in numerous public collections, Hawaii Temple Visitor Center, San Francisco Bay Wildlife Refuge & Columbia River Gorge Visitor Center. Private and corporate collections include Schnitzer Steel, Clint Eastwood, and the performer Joanna Newsom.

Hazel Schlesinger grew up in Cannon Beach and is a devoted Plein Air oil painter, belonging to the Oil Painters of America and the Plein Air Painters of Hawaii. Her work has been featured in Southwest Art Magazine and has been featured in the TV Series filmed in Portland with Timothy Hutton. She is also known and collected for her delightful abstracts.

Douglas Granum is a renowned bronze sculptor known for “Raven Discovering Mankind in a Clam Shell” we have a maquette or model of this bronze sculpture and there is a 28 foot version on Camano Island. His latest project

is a life-size fisherman in bronze, based on a Asahel Curtis Photograph from 1909. “The Big Catch.” The image is of a cannery worker with a King Salmon.

For several years the sculptor carved cedar canoes in the northwest style. It is one of these canoes he has selected to be scanned by the very latest 3D technology that he will have cast in bronze. He is bringing a very special guest who is an international leader in this technology, Rob Arps. Arps has worked on big projects with Disney worldwide.

Granum created the basalt sculpture in front of the gallery with wings. Two months of work went into the project.

A Friday evening reception will be held with jazz guitar of Bobcat Bob and wine educator Patrick McElligott pouring award winning Sineann Wines. Northwest By Northwest Gallery is located at 232 N. Spruce, Cannon Beach, Oregon; established 1987. Contact Northwest-ByNorthwestGallery.com for times and event schedule (503) 436-0741.

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