

see whether or not these medicinal smoke deliveries could be explored by western medicine. Findings included: “The advantages of smoke-based remedies are rapid delivery to the brain, more efficient absorption by the body and lower costs of production. Perhaps good news for back-to-school germ season?”

In my outdoor Summerfest demo

series (see below) in August, I will be demonstrating how to make Russian sage bundles and how they’re used, as well as other backyard herbs we can easily grow in our gardens and window sills for good health and pest control.

Monument Community Garden on view

Surrounded by sunflowers, the Monument Community Garden shows off its

summer crops, prepping for fall crops. Location: north end of Lavelett Park, Beacon Lite Road, Monument.

Summerfest: nature talks, herbs, celebrations

On Aug. 3, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Summerfest includes an alpaca petting zoo, garden ideas and goodies, art, and talks on local plants including herbs. Herbs, soil talks, and more Aug. 10 and 17 10 a.m.

to 4 p.m. and by appointment. Southwinds Fine Art Gallery, 16575 Rollercoaster Rd.

Janet Sellers is a “simple ways” ethnobotanologist, aka lazy gardener. She researches and writes about nature, gardens, and re-discovering ancient healthy living ideas. Contact her at JanetSellers@ocn.me.

Art Matters

Art rentals—the Netflix of art?



By Janet Sellers

Most of us buy art because blank walls are bleak, and art offers a sense of completion like no other expressive form. As an artist, I change the art at home, studios, and galleries. But, what if you’re not an artist and want to put up something and live with it for a while to see how it fits in? Enter art rentals or art leasing.

There are many ways a perfect art fit happens, from homes or dorm rooms to enormous corporate buildings. A search for the right art is a search for the right influence and feel to a place. This is human, and we humans have been doing this since cave paintings! We usually think of buying art, but we can rent it and change it out, too.

The importance of art at work

Workplace art studies worldwide have helped businesses address key challenges such as reducing stress (78% agreed), increasing creativity (64% agreed) and encouraging expression of opinions (77% agreed). 80% of the women (66% of the men) in the studies agreed that art at the office could reduce their stress levels. Furthermore, 92% of the women stated that art affects their general well-being, compared to 71% of the men.

Japan’s Hiroshima University studied workers who looked online at cute baby animals. “The present study shows that perceiving cuteness not only improves fine motor skills but also increases perceptual carefulness.” And, they note that cute objects might be useful to “induce careful behavioral tendencies” in “specific situations, such as driving and office work.”

The London law firm JAG Shaw

Baker bought quirky, eclectic pieces of art, which are unusual for a sector known for its conservatism. “When it came to fitting out the office, I wanted something that was fun, open and didn’t look like a conservative law firm—the clients really appreciate that.”

Art rentals and leases offer clients short-term enjoyment into long-term ownership, and leasing credits can go toward eventually owning artwork. This gives the art from artists or galleries to the client with some leeway for change. The art rental/leasing offers artists passive income while clients “think it over.”

Artists, designers, and curators help client decisions from homes to corporations. Artists rent out art through many channels including art advisory firms, corporate consultants, or directly asking firms about how they acquire art for their firm.

Art and corporate strategy

I often visit an organization with a ground floor of framed posters in neutral, horizontal lines, abstract colors with calm, copacetic, modest influences. The next floor’s posters include circle elements reminiscent of targets, on view to problem-solving employees dealing with targets and plans for corporate success; the meeting rooms have dynamic posters with “challenge” imagery—athletes, adventure, wildlands. The firm’s top floors have artful paintings, not posters; the rich painted surface implies stability and sturdy investment. With mere peripheral impact, even the corporate walls were purposeful.

Nowadays, corporations are wary of how art collecting looks to share-

holders and business relationships. The show-off 1980s corporate arts one-upmanship has waned in favor of separate corporate art collection investment, not evident from the interiors. Further sleuthing could reveal pricey, upscale corporate art interest. Some art is sold during corporate downturns, like stocks.

Buying original art has qualities that live through generations, holding interest and value. Artists, art sellers, and buyers have costs and use smart choices to enjoy the process. Buying nationally and internationally could lack personal, creative affinity; buying locally supports our creative community here at home. The local advantage? Knowing the artist personally, having a pleasant, personal relationship overall, and being in front for what’s next!

Art Hop

A summer evening with art, music, conviviality in Historic Monument. The next Art Hop is set for 5 to 8 p.m. **Aug. 15** at:

- Bella Art and Frame Gallery, featured artist, member artists. 183 Washington St.
- Santa Fe Trail Jewelry, with featured courtyard artists, 106 Second St.
- Bliss studio and gallery, art of Jodie Bliss, 243 Washington St.
- Gallery 132, group of artists, crafters, events. 251 Front St.

August, September festive weekends

Studio events, weekend creative fun:
Southwinds Fine Art Gallery—Taste of Summer, Aug. 3, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.: art, crafts, baby alpaca petting zoo, mega-bubbles, herbfest,

farmer’s market; Aug. 10, 17, 24, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.: art, crafts, mega-bubbles, herbfest, farmer’s market.

Front Range Open Studios—annual Open Studios weekend: art, artist demos, creative environments, Sept. 7-8, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Maps at local shops and online at FrontRangeOpenStudios.com.

Janet Sellers is an artist, writer, speaker, and teacher. Contact her at janetsellers@ocn.me.



Above: Artist Sarah Dean demonstrated her equine oil painting techniques for an admiring crowd at Bella Art and Frame Gallery at the Art Hop on July 18 in Historic Monument. Dean is the gallery’s July featured artist and her equine and Western-themed paintings and graphite pencil works proved to be a favorite of visitors this year. The monthly Art Hop is a community art festival with all kinds of art, live music, food trucks, and more on a walk around town. The next one is from 5 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 15. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

Snapshots of Our Community

Barn Dance, July 3



Above: On July 3, the Barn Dance, as is its tradition, started off the Fourth of July festivities for the Tri-Lakes community. Ronnie Davis and the Rocky Mountain Outlaws were the musical headliner that got attendees on the dance floor throughout the night. Bill Miller, who coordinated the event this year, said the event was “honoring Si, Dorothy, and the Sibell family for their contributions and commitment to the Tri-Lakes community.” Si, a former mayor of Monument, passed away in December 2018. Miller said proceeds from the event will support Wounded Warrior USA and American Legion Post 911. *Photo by David Futey.*

Bethesda Gardens BBQ, July 3



Above: Bethesda Gardens Assisted Living celebrated Independence Day a day early, on July 3, with an annual barbecue for the residents. The event was open to the public and was enjoyed by many from the staff of the Town of Monument and Veterans of Foreign Wars. *Photo by John Howe.*