

Art Matters

Using art pieces for effect where you live and work

By Janet Sellers

It is fun to develop the artful eye by visiting a local gallery, museum, or artist studio, and these places cheerfully greet visitors and welcome questions and art as a budding interest. Some local galleries and artists have brick-and-mortar showrooms, and many have online galleries to view, or both. Your artful eye can be developed with experiences, such as visiting galleries and taking an art class to learn more.

Just about anyone likes to enrich their home or office with objects they like to see, things that bring one pleasure and fun. We can all enjoy art on a daily basis. Investing in some art is a good use of mind and money, since art, overall, tends to be enjoyable and can increase

in value with less upkeep than most purchases such as cars, appliances, and even homes.

The recent Parade of Homes in our area, long a benchmark for home style and decor ideas, showcased artwork in every room as a focus to support the sense of home value, with large wall paintings, small desk top sculptures, and wall murals that balanced and brought in an upscale aesthetic throughout. I noticed that in all of the homes, the key features for decorating were large artworks creating a distinguished and personal style; even the showers and bathroom areas were filled with art and sculptures for tables and walls.

The artwork also helped to keep the eye focused on the interiors of the homes and not window views, which of course were filled with the neighboring meadows, rolling hills, and lots and lots of homes—proving the importance art plays in urban and suburban settings for value and effect.

Landscapes prevailed in several styles: the realism of studio and fresh plein air works, as well as whimsical to serious abstractions. Natural and Colorado-ana were the mainstays in the artworks, many with close portraits of local wildlife and farm animals, especially cows.

While the artworks event-wide were vividly colored and upscale, the color schemes of the season for interiors were mostly subdued for an established, worn-in effect. Most places showed using the grayed browns, and textured walls were offset with massive black or white frames with any size photographs within them. The bigger the frame, the greater the stature to the artwork.

Paintings were framed in gilt woods, or rough woods (think: barn or fence woods) antiqued with silver over gold, definitely giving a balance to the current era of rustics in stone, woods, and oors. I jokingly mentioned to someone that the oors and woods seem to come “pre-ruined” and certainly avoiding a “too new” look. The trend is away from slick, shiny, and harsh to a warm stone and wood feel that almost required those landscape

paintings, since the warm tones complete the feeling of established gentry.

My favorite part about talking to people—especially artists—about art is that every viewer has his or her own take on what the artwork is, and it can be quite personal to the viewer without even being similar to what the artist was thinking. Therein lies the magic of art, as it develops a life of its own, once made.

So, I encourage our readers to take in the local arts events this month, from galleries, studio visits, Art Hop night, and more. Plan on falling in love with some original art, too. There is something about the real deal, the authentic art piece that mere copies cannot match: textures, colors, effects and for some, even the touch of the original art just begs for close inspection.

September art events

Art Hop—It’s the last one of the year! Thursday, Sept. 18, 5 to 8 p.m. in Historic Monument, between Second and Third Streets and Jefferson and Front Streets. Eighteen local merchants are open and have art and artists for the event at their places, both indoors and outdoors.

Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts—“Fine Art, Children’s Illustration, and Photography” by Wendy Francisco, Sept. 5 to Nov. 1. “Twice Upon a Time” exhibit by debi Story Maddox. Opening reception for both shows, Sept. 5, 5 to 8 p.m., 304 Highway 105, Palmer Lake.

Front Range Open Studios—Sept. 13, 14. Now with 16 members, the local art tour is in its fourth year. Participants will be demonstrating their art processes in their studios. For details and maps, visit www.frontrangeopenstudios.com.

Janet Sellers is a local artist and art teacher. Her paintings and sculptures are exhibited at local businesses, the Monument Sculpture Park, and various Colorado museums and cities. She can be reached via OCN at JanetSellers@OCN.me.



Above: From left, Gina Blickenstaff, Jeff Ward, and Robin Walters are pictured at the August Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts show “Farm Friends,” Artists Blickenstaff and Walters visited local farms in Tri-Lakes environs, capturing the colors, textures, and lives of those they met. Ward built the frames for the works. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

Snapshots of Our Community

Pikes Peak Library District Hosts Ice Cream Social at Chautauqua Festival in Palmer Lake



Above Left: Local families line up for treats at the Ice Cream Social sponsored by the Palmer Lake Friends of the Pikes Peak Library District on Aug. 2 as part of the Palmer Lake Chautauqua Festival at Palmer Lake Town Hall and the Village Green.

Above Right: From left, Gus Freyer, Bob Yates, and Mickey Schmidt were the scoopers Aug. 2 at the Ice Cream Social, sponsored by the Palmer Lake Friends of the Pikes Peak Library District.

Left: From left, Diane Sawatzki and Sandy Yates presided over the topings for the Social.

Photos by Janet Sellers and Harriet Halbig.