

'Celebrate' community arts at Studio Place Arts

Jim Lowe | November 16, 2017



Stefan Hard / Staff Photo

Barre artist Kristin Schuyler's giraffe, in mixed acrylic media, is featured along with an eclectic collection of pottery, paintings, fiber arts, and other member creations in SPA's annual holiday gift show.

BARRE – Since the doors of Studio Place Arts (SPA) opened in 2000 after an extensive renovation of a dilapidated building once described as a “spot blight” in downtown Barre, this visual arts center has motivated students, weekend dabblers and professional artists to share their creativity each year in a three-floor show aptly named,

“Celebrate!” This year, the holiday season show includes work by more than 75 local artists and craftspeople; it is on display Nov. 15-Dec. 28 with expanded gallery hours during December.



Stefan Hard / Staff Photo

Hardwick artist Alexandra Bottinelli's found wood sculpture sits in front of Milton artist Nancy Tomczak's watercolor collage on the third floor of SPA's holiday gift show.

Community members are invited to attend the opening reception from 4 to 6 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 18, to celebrate the season and honor local creative folks who are associated with the art center.

Humbugs hang from pedestals; angels with wings fashioned from mica float on the walls; a brontosaurus strolls through a tiny moss-encased terrarium; and a young giraffe attempts to lift its awkwardly proportioned torso from the ground. Say what?

Yes, and the walls of the SPA galleries are hung with fine paintings, photographs and collages; in fact, there is such an array of 2-D works that even the stairways of the building have artwork on display.

Additionally, there are ceramic rooster vases and drinking vessels, hand-stitched photo albums and journals, memorable cards, felted scarves, hats and purses, vintage furniture and boxes painted with farm animals and rural scenes, and hand-painted silk scarves and headbands. There is an abundance of original work from which to select a small gift for a colleague or a significant treasure – perhaps bound to become a family heirloom – for a spouse.

“We’ve evolved from a ‘spot blight’ to a ‘bright spot’ over the years,” Executive Director Sue Higby said. She also described one of her favorite aspects of the holiday season show, when couples visit SPA to select artwork that represents a gift to each other.

For expanded hours, seasonal events and promotions, go online to www.studioplacearts.com.