

Dry Canyon Community Art Center Presents: Emerging and Established

By Laura Fouts and Dina Rhoden

Art is one of the ways a community recognizes itself. It gives shape to wonder, struggle, beauty, memory, and place. In that spirit, Dry Canyon Community Art Center is proud to present Emerging and Established, a new exhibition that brings together the youthful creativity of local high school students with the experience and accomplished vision of more mature artists. The show runs through the end of May.

This exhibition features student artists from Redmond and other Central Oregon areas, many of them showing their work publicly for the very first time. That matters. To see one's art framed, lit, and given wall space in a gallery is more than a milestone. It tells young people that what they imagine, make, and dare to share has value. It tells them their voices belong in the larger cultural life of their town.

Encouraging children and teenagers in the arts is not an optional extra in a healthy community; it is part of how a community forms imagination, confidence, discipline, and empathy. Long before most young artists know whether they will pursue art professionally, they are learning how to see carefully, make choices, solve problems, and trust their own vision. The arts teach patience, risk, attentiveness, and courage. They help students discover not only what they can make, but who they are becoming.

Dry Canyon Arts Association has made that encouragement part of its mission. The organization is instrumental in funding art programs in elementary schools throughout the Redmond School District. At the suggestion of Dr. Charan Cline, Superintendent of Redmond School District, May was selected as the perfect time to showcase some of the most outstanding student work produced this year, as the school year winds down. The exhibition has also created an opportunity for Dry Canyon members to mentor students in how to prepare their work for display in a gallery setting—an education in presentation and professionalism.

Alongside the student work is art by members of the High Desert Art League, a group of twelve professional, award-winning Central Oregon artists with deep knowledge across a variety of media, including watercolor, acrylic, pastel, oil, photography, and more. Their presence brings depth and range to the show, while also reminding younger artists that a life in the arts can be sustained through years of devotion to craft.

Also featured are artists from SageBrushers Art Society of Bend, the oldest arts organization in Central Oregon. SageBrushers has long provided artists with a place to refine their craft in the company of others working in similar media, while also offering classes and workshops for members and the public. Roughly twenty-seven SageBrushers members have work in this exhibition.

To broaden the gallery experience even further, local ceramic artists were invited to contribute their creative work, adding texture, form, and dimensional variety to the show. The Featured Artist for May is Molly Frietag, a longtime Central Oregon artist and chaplain whose abstractions shimmer

between landscape and inner life, between sky and cell, between river current and nerve current. Molly describes her paintings as “Abstract with an organic quality about them, and can be seen as evocative of galaxies, skies, water environments, a microscopic view or pathways of change through fields of light and movement.” We hope visitors enjoy the richness and diversity of this exhibition, with its wide range of ages, media, and artistic experience. In June and July, Dry Canyon Community Art Center will present “America the Beautiful,” featuring Dry Canyon Arts Association members exclusively, with work in all media.

See Molly Freitag’s work on display through the month of May at the Dry Canyon Community Art Center at 415 SW 6th Street in downtown Redmond, or join her at the Art Center for a celebration of her work during First Friday, May 1st, between 5:00 and 8:00 pm.

The Dry Canyon Community Art Center is open Tuesday through Thursday from 11am to 6pm and Friday through Saturday from 11am to 7pm. On First Friday, the gallery is open all day from 11am to 8pm.