RETURN TO NATURE
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INSIDE:
STUDIO 55,
WOMEN'S ART
AT THE DISHMAN
BEAU DUMESNIL,
AND MORE
GRETCHEN WAS A FEMINIST
AND WAS QUITE CAPABLE
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

THE ISSUE
Vol. 15, No. 6
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ISSUE is a monthly publication of The Art Studio, Inc. the mission is to publicize The Art Studio and its tenants, and to promote the growth of the arts in Southeast Texas. ISSUE is also charged with informing TASI members of projects, progress, achievements and setbacks in TASI’s well-being. Further, ISSUE strives to promote and distribute the writings of local authors in its “Thoughtcrime” feature. ISSUE is provided free of charge to members of TASI and is also available, free of charge, at more than 30 locations in Southeast Texas. ISSUE is also charged with informing its tenants, and to promote the growth of the arts in Southeast Texas. ISSUE is also charged with informing TASI members of projects, progress, achievements and setbacks in TASI’s well-being. Further, ISSUE strives to promote and distribute the writings of local authors in its “Thoughtcrime” feature. ISSUE is provided free of charge to members of TASI and is also available, free of charge, at more than 30 locations in Southeast Texas. Regular features include local artists of note and reports of exhibitions in Southeast Texas, is boosting my relationship here: We ask, “Do we need it?” If there is a two-second hesitation, IT’S GONE. Simple.

And we have space — a clean and well-lit space. I love that phrase. It speaks of the only thing an artist really needs.

And WHOS you may ask, is doing the work? Our resident artist and part-time boat captain, Beau Dumesnil! Beau has been the ramrod for this operation and has generated a huge amount of interest and volunteers to The Studio (see the story on page 5). Without Beau’s commitment, we would still be wading through the refuse hoping it would all walk out the door for us!

YEAH, I KNOW, I’M thanking people again. If you’ve been through The Studio in the past few weeks, you’ve noticed a remarkable difference in how things look. You can see the walls and the floor. Water does not permeate every inch of space, and it almost doesn’t smell musty throughout the building. All the ruined material and equipment is now gone. Things we thought we needed, we find, are not needed after all.

Four dumpsters are full of metal and trash, broken art and broken dreams. lofty goals that fell from the loft. It is reality here: We ask, “Do we need it?” If there is a two-second hesitation, IT’S GONE. Simple.

And we have space — a clean and well-lit space. I love that phrase. It speaks of the only thing an artist really needs.

And WHO, you may ask, is doing all this? Our own resident artist and part-time boat captain, Beau Dumesnil! Beau has been the rudder for this operation and has generated a huge amount of interest and volunteers to The Studio (see the story on page 5). Without Beau’s commitment, we would still be wading through the refuse hoping it would all walk out the door for us!

I would be remiss to not mention Beau’s dear wife Karen who has been there every step of the way.

We have several new tenants and it feels good to hear voices in the depths of The Studio, to hear radios inspiring someonoe upstairs, and to see a table full of people in the break room talking clay!

Sheila Molandies has been plying her skills as a carpenter repairing walls, painting cabinets and fixing our gallery steps, the most recent casualty of termites. Not to worry, we are replacing them with concrete steps, with metal rails to be generously fabricated by Colby Dahl, contributing artist and member of The Art Studio.

I’ve got help in the administrative part of the operation. In the office, my inner sanctum, Deborah Ragnall, new to Southeast Texas, is boosting my organization. She is also cleaning our membership drive, so watch for a fresh approach to an old request.

It’s beginning to look and smell like a studio rather than a cold, damp ware-house.

See VIEW on page 11

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS AT THE ART STUDIO
APRIL
TASIMJAE (The Art Studio, Inc. Member Juried Art Exhibition)
Opening: .................. April 4

MAY
Nathan Jones (TASIMJAE 2006 winner)
Opening: ................. May 2

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE ART STUDIO
Membership in The Art Studio, Inc., provides invitations to all exhibitions and one year of ISSUE, the monthly arts magazine of The Art Studio. It also gives free eligibility for members to enter the annual membership art exhibition (TASIMJAE) and participate in various exhibitions throughout the year.

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The Art Studio, Inc. Board of Directors

TASIMJAE (The Art Studio, Inc. Member Juried Art Exhibition)
Opening: .................. April 4

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Cover: Karen Anders, left, Colby Ferguson and Kate Ferguson lean over the boardwalk at Shangri La Botanical Gardens and Nature Reserve at Orange, March 7. (Photo by Andy Coughlan.)

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SEE MEMBERSHIP FORM ON PAGE 3.
**SYNCHRONICITY** (n): A coincidence of events that seem to be causally related, conceived in Jungian theory as an epistemological principle on the same order as causality.

Once upon a time, a commercial real estate broker Arnold worked with the owner of a property on Dowlen Road in Beaumont. One of the locations housed a shoe store. The shoe store went out of business. The owner of the property did not want vacant spaces, so Arnold contacted his friend Maureen Winchell, who makes jewelry, to see if she wanted to rent a space for Christmas. Arnold worked with the owner of the property to arrange the lease. The original plan was that this location would be used to sell vintage furniture, it was a logical thing to do. Winchell said. “We have never been profitable yet, so we were happy to go on a month-to-month deal, but I would love to make it a permanent endeavor – sign on that bottom line and be here because, even though it wasn’t the original concept, it is a great concept.”

The company scheduled to move into the shop in January never completed the deal, so Studio 55 is still there.

“We’ve been able to continue on and we like it.”

The original concept, it is a great concept.

“Our store is for everyone, and we really have a little something for everyone.”

Winchell said. “When we first opened, we had gone to market to sell our pieces, but the walls were a teal blue and lime green and we decided we probably needed to do a little bit of painting to sell it for the Christmas season.

“We were going to do it drably at first because you don’t want to put money into a temporary endeavor,” Winchell said. “We were not going to paint originally, but the walls were a teal blue and lime green and we decided we probably needed to do a little bit of painting to make it look more appealing.”

In another synchronous move, the person they thought would have a chance to open a retail shop for three months, rented out Jan. 1, Winchell said. “I said, ‘You want me to open a retail shop for three months?”

“I said, ‘OK’ — because that’s a logical thing to do.”

Winchell said the original plan was just to put some furniture up and have a small storefront where people knew who did photography or art would have a chance to sell their work.

See **STUDIO 55 on page 11**
Dishman exhibit ‘Better Than Ever’ celebrates legacy of ground-breaking ’70s SoHo women artists

It may seem as though the arts scene is an all-male arena where creative folk can join together to show off their skills. However, as in all things, even in the arts there are those who are excluded through lack of opportunity or even outright discrimination.

A mere three decades ago, women were on the outside looking in. Galleries rarely represented women, even in the vibrant, liberal arts scene of New York City. A group of women took their fate into their own hands and created a series of co-ops — self- administered cooperatives — in the Big Apple’s SoHo area so they could exhibit and sell their work. In doing so, these ground-breaking artists redefined the role of women in the arts, and created the cooperative model that is an essential part of any thriving community arts scene.

The Dishman Art Museum at Lamar University will host ‘Better Than Ever: Women Figurative Artists of the ’70s SoHo Co-ops’ through April 22. The show will open April 3 with a free lecture at 6 p.m. followed by a reception at 7 p.m.

Curator Sharyn Fennigan said that not only were women excluded from the commercial art scene, but that figurative painters generally were overlooked in favor of abstraction. The women saw a need to change the art world, as well as having a need to have their work seen.

“The commercial art scene was not amenable to my kind of figurative work, so I saw very little of it in the major galleries,” she said. “Many of us felt that we would only have an impact if we bonded together to get it out there. On top of that, as a feminist I was aware of the bias against women artists, so that added to the motivation. Certainly personally, I wanted an outlet for my work and this seemed such an empowered way to do it.”

Fennigan, who was a member and first director of the Price Street Gallery co-op, said that all the groups worked together to accomplish a common goal. The co-ops were not restricted to women, but they seemed a need to help each other.

“I was in a co-op that was both men and women and it seemed to me the women bonded more and really worked together (modeling for one another) and supported one another,” she said. “In retrospect, the community I found myself in was the most important aspect of the experience and many of those women are still my friends. It was the motivation for this current exhibit. Half the women in the exhibit are my good friends since that period. The others are artists I admired in the other co-ops I frequented.”

Fu Lien is director of the Dishman Art Museum and worked with Fennigan at the Parsons School of Design in New York for 10 years. Fu did her dissertation on 1970s feminist art and her work is particularly relevant.

“People are constantly asking me about feminism or feminist. I often say it’s a plural form. There are many different feminisms. It’s still an important question to ask and there is a need for these women to create an outlet for their work.”

Fu said. “Don’t forget that it is the art making and the inspiration that is the heart of the movement, not the fame or money.”

Participants in the show include (above, standing from left): Darla Dorah, Cynthia Malmier, Shaw Stull, Torrey Lawrence, Naloo Orbik, Barbara Grossman, Susan Grahat, Marcus Clark. (Seated from left): Sharyn Fennigan, Maryann Kramer, Marian Leonor Louie and Teresa Bell.

Members of the Prince Street Gallery co-op, 1974, pose in this 1974 photo.

All images courtesy Sharyn Fennigan

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Members of the Prince Street Gallery co-op, 1974, pose in this 1974 photo.

All images courtesy Sharyn Fennigan
In April the THE ARTISTS MUSEUM will host an exhibition of photographs by WILLIAM JAMESON in the main gallery.

JAMESON is a British figurative painter. Her recent works include oil paintings inspired by the works of Velázquez and Vermeer, and small works depicting machine零件.

Her large paintings are now the most figurative, reminiscent of works by such painters as Van Gogh, Paul Revere, and Lucius Freud.

At the same time, SNAPSHOTS: AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW will be on display in the Holloway Gallery.

Artists for the NECHI REVIEWS FESTIVAL will be accepted April 8-15, 10-4 p.m. at the BEAUMONT ART LEAGUE.

The opening reception is slated for Sunday, April 19, 2-4 p.m. Exhibition dates are April 26-29.

Entries are open to all area artists. Cost is $7 per entry, for $9 for non members. Artists may submit up to three entries.

Council’s Platinum certification for the U.S. Green Building Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for new construction. “We’re members of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for new construction. The doors simply opened just like any normal day. For all of the center’s design and enthusiasm to each other. We are still searching for people to do research and grants, development, library expansion, archiving and a host of small, but significant tasks that make up the life blood and bones of this organization. We are here so to stay!

STUDIO 55 from page 4

“Those are patches of garden out here that have improved because we have done so much work to create new flowers and plants, as well as adding to the existing gardens. ‘There are patches of garden out here that have improved because we had to redo them,’ Hoke said. ‘We were mistakes’ We’ve been mistaken a lot.”

The store has work by more than 60 artists. Most of it is by local artists, but they also have glass work from New Orleans. It is important to Winchell that local artists are featured. One of Winchell’s prized works is one of the last pieces by Jerry Newman.

Artists are notoriously hard about the business side of art. Winchell sees Studio 55 as allowing a need, citing the old mantra, “It takes a village.”

The thing that makes people good creatively doesn’t always provide them the structure they need in a business sense,” she said. “I am not an art broker by any stretch of the imagination. I just know what I really like. And we’ve become art brokers.”

Winchell laughs, as she does often. She is someone who seems to really enjoy the position in which she has found herself.

She enjoys being able to bring the work of local artists to the consciousness of collectors.

“I think sometimes it’s hard for people to secure that what they like is OK to have,” she said. “They feel like they need to go to a known quantity.”

Arnold said she’d really like to find someone with a strong interest in the arts, perhaps an art major in college, interested in promoting Studio 55 and working to establish it as a strong location for artists to sell their work.

Purposes of the Art Studio, Inc.

The purpose of The Art Studio, Inc. is to (1) provide cultural opportunities between the general public and the community of artists and (2) to offer sustained support for the artist by operating a non-profit cooperative to provide studio space and exhibition space to working artists and crafts people, and to provide a place for group work sessions for these artists and crafts people to jointly offer their labor, ideas, and enthusiasm to each other.

GOALS

1. To present 10 art exhibitions per year
2. To provide peer feedback through association with other artists and crafts people
3. To provide accessible equipment
4. To provide regular adult and children’s classes
5. To develop and maintain public activities
6. To develop and maintain equipment to aid artists in their work
7. To provide a display retail outlet for artists
8. To expand programming and activities with increased facility space
9. To provide educational opportunities between the public and the Southeast Texas community of artists; furnishing affordable studio forms in Southeast Texas; and providing art educational opportunities to everyone, of any age, regardless of income level, race, national origin, sex or religion.

We are here to stay!

STUDIO 55 INC.
Mission Statement

Founded in 1983, The Art Studio, Inc. is devoted to providing opportunities for interaction between the public and the Southeast Texas community of artists. It is our intent to create a multi-purpose space to exhibit and market the works of local artists. Our purpose is to offer cultural opportunities between the general public and the community of artists and to offer sustained support for the artist by operating a non-profit cooperative to provide studio space and exhibition space to working artists and crafts people, and to provide a place for group work sessions for these artists and crafts people to jointly offer their labor, ideas, and enthusiasm to each other.

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The potential is just so there.” Studio 55 is located at 3195 Dowlen Road in Beaumont. For more information, call 409-880-4415.

For more information, call 409-860-4415.
ON DISPLAY IN APRIL

TASIMJAE

THE ART STUDIO, INC. MEMBERS JURIED ART EXHIBITION

Juried by Lamar art professor Xenia Fedorchenko

Come and see works by TASI members.
On display through April 25.
Opening reception 7-10 p.m., April 4.

This project is funded in part by the Texas Commission on the Arts, Dishman Trust, Entergy, HEB, and the Vic Rogers Foundation through the
Southeast Texas Arts Council

ISSUE

Volunteers
These people are the life blood of our organization.
WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!
To volunteer, drop by The Art Studio, Inc., or call 409-838-5393.

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