

# ISSUE

THE ARTS MAGAZINE OF THE ART STUDIO, INC

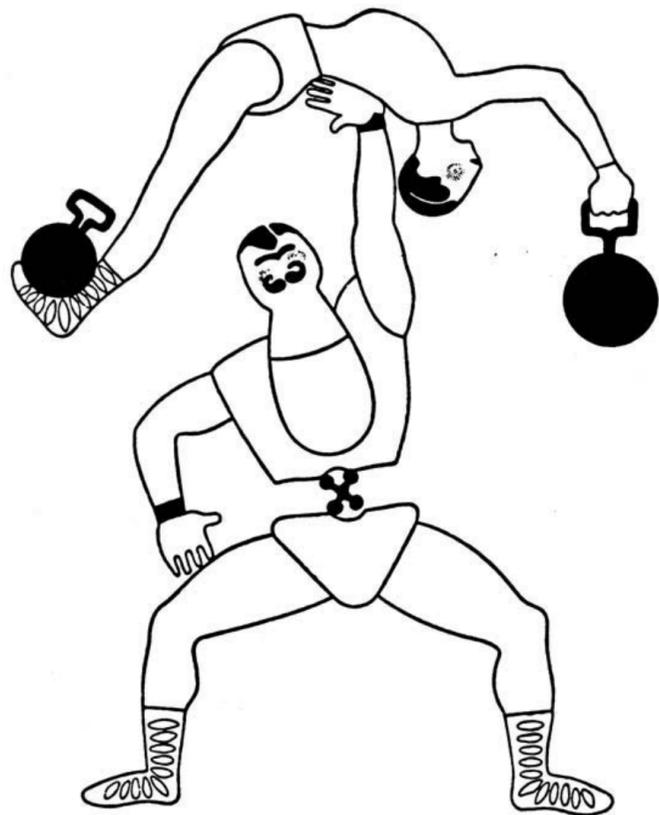
SEPTEMBER 2008



**CURIOUS  
GEORGE**

Page 6

INSIDE: TASI TENANTS SHOW,  
THE BARKING DOG, AND MORE



**OLAF AND OLGA DIDN'T HAVE TO WORK  
SO HARD TO BE ACCEPTED.**

**ALL THEY NEEDED WAS A MEMBERSHIP.**



SEE MEMBERSHIP FORM ON PAGE 3.



**ISSUE** Vol. 15, No. 1

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The ISSUE is a monthly publication of The Art Studio, Inc. Its 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.

Regular features include local artists of note and reputation who are not currently exhibiting at TASI; artists currently or soon to be exhibiting at TASI; instructional articles for artists; news stories regarding the state of TASI's organization; and arts news features dealing with general philosophical issues of interest to artists.

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Cover: George Wentz  
by Andy Coughlan.

# A View From The Top

Greg Busceme, TASI Director



IT SEEMS THAT I have a keen interest in those pursuits that will not afford me a decent living.

In my pre-clay days, from eighth grade to sophomore year in college, I was determined to write and publish poetry. My eighth grade teacher at St. Anne's School felt, to her own surprise, that my poetry had merit. "Good" was a word rarely applied to my school work. So, with that bit of encouragement I started to write my elementary form of doggerel.

Through high school, poetry was my outlet for the pressure and stress of adolescence and thus, the work was dark and morose wailings of things unrequited. Death was also a biggie.

By the time I arrived in college, I was poet personified. Thick hair and beard, sweaters with corduroy pants, plaid flannel shirts, pens and notepads sticking out. After a few semesters of creative writing and poetry classes and writing about—everything, I snagged a job as assistant editor/staff of PULSE magazine, the literary and fine art publication at Lamar University.

I worked on four issues, three as editor, between 1976-1979, the same time I began doing ceramics.

Ultimately, the academic level in poetry circles became more than I could handle

and I turned my full interest to clay.

The reason I'm telling this story is so you understand why we have poetry in every ISSUE. If there is a graveyard of dying art, poetry can find itself there. We want to encourage anyone who takes the energy and time to bring words together to enlighten or entertain.

And that brings me to another reason I'm writing this today. The reason we had PULSE magazine at all was for the generosity of a sweet woman named Eleanor Weinbaum. Eleanor donated a reading room/library in the English department, and the funds to produce a literary book of student work. The budget included a staff to produce PULSE.

The Eleanor reading room is still there and PULSE is still publishing.

Without someone like Eleanor, poetry and a host of other related subjects become jeopardized simply through attrition. She gave a gift that has no bounds, has provided kids like me a chance to put our hands on culture, breathe life into it and pass it on as a healthy child. Eleanor Weinbaum inspired me with her graceful humility and her infinite enthusiasm, even in her later years.

She brought poetry to us then as now,

See VIEW on page 11

## UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS AT THE ART STUDIO

**SEPTEMBER**

TASI Tenants Show  
Opening..... September 6

**OCTOBER**

Lynn Sanchez Paintings  
Opening..... October 4

## 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. 720 Franklin, Beaumont 77701



# OPENING DOORS

## Season's first show offers glimpse of TASI tenants' art

SUMMER IS A TIME OF vacations, a time when people seek sun and fun in the great outdoors.

The Art Studio lights are dim during the summer. There are no art shows and, except for the crunch of guitars during the monthly Band Nites, from the outside the place looks pretty quiet.

But behind the closed doors, there is activity. At odd hours, sometimes at

night to beat the heat, sometimes during the day to beat a deadline for a show, The Art Studio tenants drift in and out to work on their various projects.

Visitors glimpse the fruits of their collective labors during the Tenants Show, the annual kickoff for the arts season, beginning with a reception 7-9 p.m., Sept. 6.

The exhibition will include work by

Cyndi Grimes, Sue Wright, Rhonda Rodman, Rhonda McNally, Marianna Measells, Beau Dumesnil, Karen Dumesnil, Sandra Laurette, Suzanne Garrett, Stephen Scales, Elizabeth Pearson and Andy Coughlan.

McNally is one of the "girls in the back" who regularly gather on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the clay area to work, share ideas and generally enjoy each other's company.

"Anyone interested in learning how to work with clay is welcome to come talk with us on most Tuesday or Thursday evenings," McNally said. "We will be glad to share how we got started at The Studio and why we are enjoying the workspace, learning opportunities, and camaraderie."

They offer lessons in the clay area (Cyndi Grimes is holding classes in October, see page 12 for information).

Grimes got involved in The Studio years ago when she took a class there.

McNally said it is not only the work that draws them to The Studio.

"We are members of The Art Studio to meet not only our individual hobby needs, but also to help support the many other events and activities the Art Studio offers," she said. "Come join in on the fun."

Marianna Measells has a space at TASI where she expresses herself in a variety of media. She said she looks forward to the new season of art shows.

"The Tenants Show, to me, is like a

'reunion' — a time to see and visit with friends we don't always see during the summer," she said. "It allows us to share in a vision of the new creativeness that continues to develop year after year."

Full tenant spaces are available for \$85 a month. Partial tenant status is only \$40 a month. This affords artists access to all the facilities The Studio has to offer, including the dark room.

"Even though I have been continuously working, the Tenants Show is symbolic of a new beginning," tenant Andy Coughlan said. "I try to have something new and different for the show — it's our chance to show off what we do."

Coughlan said he is taking advantage of the freedom of the Tenants Show to try something that he would not have the freedom to try at a larger show with more people.

"What I have will be spectacular — and it will be affordable," he said, with an eye to commerce.

Much of the work the tenants will show is affordable, so visitors should not be shy about making a purchase.

Cyndi Grimes said that being a tenant means many things.

"It's about sharing ideas, learning new techniques, refreshing old techniques by teaching, battling extreme temperatures and seeing friends on a regular basis," she said.

For more information on how to become a tenant, call 409-838-5393. Spaces are available.



Rhonda McNally, left, works on a piece of a "rain chain," in the clay area of The Art Studio. McNally is one of the artists who gather every Tuesday and Thursday to make art. This clay tower, above, is part of a project this group is working on for the Tenants Show.

Photos by Andy Coughlan

# Putting on the dog

## DOWNTOWN VENUE OFFERS ART, MUSIC — AND A CUP OF JOE

Story and photos by Andrew Strange

"COME. SIT. STAY."

There's a new dog in town.

The Barking Dog Coffee Lounge on Pearl Street in downtown Beaumont offers an indie inspired atmosphere for musicians, local artists and coffee drinkers alike.

Established February by Joey Crawford of Fannett, The Barking Dog offers a variety of food, fun and atmosphere.

"We are trying to go for a more anti-corporate, indie type atmosphere," Crawford said. "We wanted to give it kind of an urban look, with the walls stripped down to the bare brick and concrete. The furniture has a 1950s and 1960s theme... it's very eclectic and minimalist."

According to Crawford, part of lounge's mission is to aid artists and musicians in their endeavors.

"We want to act as a resource for local artists and musicians to get their works seen or heard on a platform they may not normally be able to.

"Fridays and Saturdays we typically have a concert featuring a local band and an out of town one. We have monthly art exhibits, fashion shows, poetry readings, and things like that. So, while people are coming in for their coffee experience they will also be exposed to works of art or music while they are here."

Local musician Blake Roddy of Beaumont describes The Dog as a low key environment that is supportive of our local arts and economy.

"It's one of the very few free trade coffee shops in the area," Roddy said. "It not only supports our local economy, but the coffee farmers as well. That's very important to me, and one of the reasons I like to play there."

"There are always quite a few people at the shows. The people that hang out there are usually open minded and into all kinds of music."

"I did an acoustic set there with an electronic group and a full rock band. It was definitely an eclectic gathering of people and music."

"I encourage people, even those who aren't into music, to go by and check it out," Roddy said. "Every time you go there is different art on the walls from area artists. It's a great way to support our local scene."

According to Crawford, the name and motto for the downtown coffee lounge came from an unlikely source.

"The name came from a neighborhood dog that was barking and keeping me up at night," Crawford said. "So the idea came from that — dragging through the day needing coffee."

"We tried so many names. I would look them up and there might already be a place like it in New York or somewhere. I didn't want it to be like any place else, so in the end, we called it The Barking Dog."

"Another part of what makes us different is the way we want to go about being a part of the community — where people can use us as a platform to gain some recognition. As opposed to just being a place to gather and drink coffee."

"That's the whole idea behind 'Come, Sit, Stay' is we want it to be more like a lounge where people can come network, get to know each other and have a good time."

Of course, it would not be a coffee lounge without coffee. The Barking Dog offers a health conscious menu with a variety of mixed coffee drinks.

"We serve different teas, coffees, lattes and cappuccino," Crawford said. "For lunch we have lighter, non-greasy foods like sandwiches and salads. We have different pastries for dessert and breakfast. But the majority of our menu consists of different coffee related drinks."

Upcoming events at The Barking Dog Lounge include an art exhibit by Michelle Cate on Sept. 5 and a concert Sept. 27, featuring We Were Wolves and Cousin Phelpy.

For more information visit [www.myspace.com/thebarkingdoglounge](http://www.myspace.com/thebarkingdoglounge).



The Barking Dog, on Pearl Street in downtown Beaumont, features art, music and a supply of pastries and beverages.



# That's life, by George

## Artist reflects on four decades as a practicing painter

Story and photos by  
Andy Coughlan

GEORGE WENTZ SITS in his wheelchair, the result of his latest battle with the diabetes he has lived with for 17 years, the August sunlight etching the lines on his face and reflecting off the glasses that dominate his face.

It is tempting to see him as frail, as somehow diminished by life. But when the conversation turns to art, Wentz's inner light goes on, his sense of fun and

inner strength brightens his sparse surroundings.

Beaumont-born Wentz is a combination of the action of the New York artists he so admires and the vibrant sun-drenched color of the post impressionists. His physical frailties are nothing more than surface impediments. Inside, his creative forces drive him forward.

He thinks deeply about the way that art reveals a person's sense of place in the world. It is not about a particular skill set, he said, but about finding a way for one to express himself.

"I think that's the main thing the 20th Century was about — who will be bold enough to find their own journey?" he said. "And then, who will be bold enough to continue on with it? Because if you continue on with it, you are going to have to pay a lot of prices."

Wentz said he has paid the price for living with his art.

"I have been beat up, persecuted, misunderstood, called everything, loved, hated — I don't care. I've just loved what I've done.

"I've had a lot of rough times in my life. But the rough times have made me who I am and I've learned to dig deep down inside of me and dig out the strength that was there and go on. And I will go on from this illness that I have.

"And I will go on to something new."

He still paints almost every day, as he has for more than 40 years. Wentz said his latest illness has affected his hands so that holding the brush is difficult. His physical frailties affect the way he paints, but in some ways it enhances the gestural technique he has been practicing for years.

"I have learned not to hold the brush so tight," he said, adding that it can give the flower paintings the organic quality he seeks.

"I can paint the floppiest poppies," he said. "But if I don't use the looseness in my hands, the flowers get stiff. What people like in my art is that loose spontaneity."

Wentz laughed and said his illness is a blessing in disguise.

He was born in 1945 on Washington Boulevard in Beaumont.



"I was born in an old house that was a city hospital after World War II," he said.

"I really must say I have often thought of why I am an artist and why people have enjoyed my work so, and I don't know. I don't know if anyone knows who they are and why they do what they do."

Wentz said he had exceptional parents.

"I had a very hard-working father who had a lot of patience, and a happy mother who had a lot of patience," he said. "My father didn't go far in school, but my mother graduated from college as valedictorian. She had a great sense of joy and a sense of how to heal her family when they were hurt. She studied psychology and literature and seemed to gain a lot of insight into human nature that way."

Wentz said he began drawing and painting when he was about five years old, and it kept on until he was in high school where he began to study under Herman Hugg at South Park High School.

"Herman had a wonderful, relaxed way of getting his students to cooperate and be themselves," he said. "There were some students who went into designing cars, designing anything at all that was mechanical. Then I went into still lifes, landscapes and figures."

After high school, Wentz attended Lamar Tech, which later became Lamar University, majoring in pre-med.

"I made A-pluses all the way through, but after about two years I thought, 'Do I really want to do this?'" he said. "Did I really want to be a doctor, into

blood and bodies and sickness?"

Wentz took a class in design and composition as an elective and, "fell in love with it."

"My teacher said, 'Why are you training to be a doctor? You need to be a painter,'" he said.

Myrtle Kerr worked with Wentz for two semesters. "She was an excellent art teacher," he said. "She had a great sense of design, a great sense of humor and a lot of joy."

A sense of joy is a recurring theme in any conversation with Wentz. It is the one constant that has infused his work through the decades.

"Myrtle got me so interested in art, and also poetry, that I thought, 'Well, I can do these things. I know a lot of other guys and girls who do these things and they seem to have fun with it, so I thought I would try my best,'" he said.

Wentz, then a first-semester freshman, entered the poetry contest and the illustration contest in Pulse (Lamar's literary magazine) and won first prize in both.

"I was so surprised," he said. "People just like the stuff I do. And that's all I've done ever since."

Wentz said that it got to a point that when he got home from school he didn't want to do his homework. He went straight to his easel and painted all weekend, day and night. He estimates that, in his lifetime, he has produced around 3,000 pieces.

"That's everything from a greeting card to any kind of design on a business card, an oil painting or acrylic painting on canvas, watercolor — you name it, I've done

it," he said.

Wentz is currently working on what he calls "gestural paintings," the style of painting produced by the American abstract expressionists from the late 1930s to the mid-1950s.

"They created a style of art that will never be forgotten," he said.

Wentz acknowledges that people who have no education in art tend to dismiss the style as childish.

"In a way, that's the whole purpose of art," he said. "Not to make it look like a child necessarily, but to do it like a child. These people claimed that the finished pieces were not the works of art. The actual works of art was the mentality involved and the gestural movement of their arms and hands and of the brush.

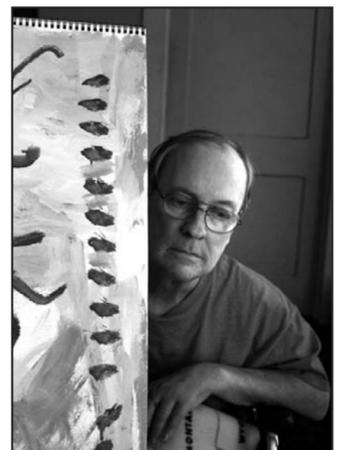
"It's not completely confused; it's kind of semi-confused."

Wentz said that while he loves abstract expressionism, it is not the only form he likes to use.

"I have to make a living, I have to eat, I have to pay taxes," he said. "So I do another thing that I have found people like, and that is my flower paintings.

"When I was about 12 years old, my mother bought my brother and I a set of American Encyclopedias," he said. "Under the section of painting, there was a section on Matisse. I studied those and became so wrapped up in them that I copied them over and over. Then I began

See WENTZ on page 11



George Wentz shows off his playful side, far left, his serious side and his art at his home in Beaumont.

## Christina Thorne to exhibit at BAL

One word sums up 2007 Beaumont Art League Membership Show winner Christina Thorne — exuberant.

With her large, bold acrylics, Thorne's work and personality exude passion, spontaneity and enthusiasm, Dana Dorman, BAL director, said.

Thorne's prize included a solo show on display Sept. 6-27.

"Her winning entry, an acrylic collage titled 'All Gussied Up,' reflects that bold image with a portrait of a woman bathed in magentas, golden yellows and blues all high-lighted with silver-leaf," Dorman said. "The frame's mirror-like quality complements that aspect of looking at oneself and getting ready to go out. Her paintings are like exclamation points, enthusiastic and dramatic. Usually large, her works fill galleries with a sense of space, joyfulness and color."

Thorne said the show will include her

large acrylic works as well as some 18 x 24 pen and ink works.

"I am excited about the show," she said. "I can't wait to exhibit at the league."

Thorne has been painting since the 1970s and claims that her paintings are a reflection of herself — quirky, goofy and full of surprises.

In a recent painting of the "elephant ears" plant, she stenciled an elephant subtly in the work.

"You have to look closely to see everything that there is to see in my works" she said.

Thorne has exhibited all around Southeast Texas and has had solo exhibitions as far away as the Big Bend area.

BAL is located at 2675 Gulf Street.

For more information, contact Dorman at 409-833-4179, or visit the league's page at [www.myspace.com/beaumontartleague](http://www.myspace.com/beaumontartleague)



Christina Thorne, left, with her winning entry at the 2007 Beaumont Art league membership Show. Woman and Wolf, above, is a recent work by Thorne.

Photos courtesy of Beaumont Art League

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### To Poetry in a Modern Forum

An Artist must often pause to think,  
What cost this passion,  
My paint my ink?  
And Poets in the world today  
Are almost told what they're allowed to say?  
Artists seem to be squeezed in little spaces,  
Being looked upon with second glances,  
Almost in these liquid trances.  
And the Poet's sites we post the most  
Is where the Prose of Poets roast.  
Is Art and Rhyme, a spirit gift of minds to fall?  
Is it Art, if it's all the novice call?  
A child or one of simple verse  
Is privy to their little cyber purse.  
To grab the honor of some crazed false praise  
Of masters of the greatest days.  
Our dear Van Gogh and our beloved Poe  
Would crush the frauds and tactless foe.  
And the chivalrous champions of Artists,  
and all of Poets past  
Would smite the shameful at long last.  
Then once again, we would have our forum  
With new found pride and changed decorum.  
Then the Art of "Artists" may again be sought  
And Poets given back to thought.

Teresa C. McKusker

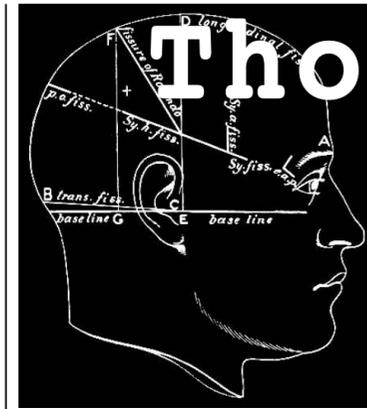
### Sausage Ball

He was just a dog.  
Trish's dog.  
Renee's dog.  
Not my dog, I don't care for pets.  
A toy poodle, for God's sake.  
He was scruffy  
(we are not really ones for grooming).  
He barked every time the front door opened.  
He got under my feet whenever I got up.  
He stood and stared at me while I ate  
(which drove me crazy).  
And I couldn't make a cheese sandwich  
without him begging  
(an argument he always won, of course).  
He was a nuisance.

But 15 years is a long time.  
And the rolling over thing  
I taught him was cute.  
And the singing was hilarious.  
And the way he sprawled across  
the back of the couch,  
he looked more relaxed than I've ever been.  
And his face, by any objective standard,  
Was so beautiful.  
And he looked so small in his grave.

And this is why I don't want pets —  
You get so attached to the damn things.

Andy Coughlan



# Thoughtcrime

### Submission Guidelines and Disclaimer

ISSUE solicits and publishes the work of local authors. Poetry, short fiction, scholarly works and opinion pieces may be submitted for review. All works must be typed or submitted on a disk (using approved word processing software), or may be sent to TASI by e-mail. All works are subject for review by our editor, and may be rejected or edited on the basis of grammar, spelling or content.

The opinions expressed in "Thoughtcrime" do not necessarily reflect the opinions of TASI, its Board of Directors, ISSUE's editorial staff, or donors to TASI. Send typed works to:

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720 Franklin, Beaumont, TX 77701  
or e-mail:  
[artstudio@artstudio.org](mailto:artstudio@artstudio.org)

Authors must submit a daytime telephone number along with all submissions. Pen names are acceptable, but authors must supply real names for verification. All submitted works become property of TASI, and whether rejected or accepted, are not returned to the author. ISSUE does not notify of rejection by mail or telephone.

### Never Land

A lost boy on a dash from here to then,  
Scared out of my mind because I never know when  
Just keep waiting, hoping to taste perfection  
Now I'm just alone: Growing old is no exception  
And that's my greatest fear...  
But maybe I could just forget that this is my own collection  
Stamped and approved,  
marred by self inflicted, my own direction  
Cause I'm not much for history — mainly my past  
I don't look at pictures because life in albums happens too fast  
But it seems I'm always over my own shoulder  
Or at least there's a mirror somewhere in the corner  
I'd rather just not look because I think I'd rather live in pretend  
Live with fairies in make believe on never never land.  
But at best I'm just wide asleep  
Pretending to dream of simple things  
and a place where no one stands alone  
Where no one knows no long wooden noses  
Where we're not treated like little toy soldiers  
Cause I have a dream of a place where life doesn't haunt me  
Where growing old is the same and life were easy  
My wish is simply wonderful  
— a taste of perfection and all things beautiful  
But somewhere I got scared  
Scared of the dash that sits from here to there  
And I stopped believing in pretend  
I stopped giving chase for never land

Cody Pastorella

### Heat

My brother took  
the Bible man into  
our garage in  
a summer shower.  
Today, it is the same  
flat, humid,  
fragrant Texas  
atmosphere  
before that hideous heat.  
A rescue and  
shelter fifty years  
behind me.

George Wentz

### The Saint and the Dead Man

The saint lay next to the dead man.

He did not move.  
He did not smile.  
He did not say a word.  
He was dead.

She felt his belly.  
She caressed his thighs.  
She kissed his quiet lips.  
She held fast to his soul.

For three days, the saint lay with him.

He did not move.  
He did not smile.  
He did not say a word.  
He was dead.

She wept no tear.  
She left not once.  
She would not cease her praying.  
She declined his awful death.

The dead man's stench increased each night.

He did not move.  
He did not smile.  
He did not say a word.  
He was dead.

She bade his family to wait.  
She made them dine and drink.  
She upbraided friends who parted.  
She stayed while he decayed.

Then all begged her to bury him.

He did not move.  
He did not smile.  
He did not say a word.  
He was dead.

She stood at last above him.  
She dragged him to her side.  
She sang in tongues unknown.  
She praised his resurrection.

The saint had made a miracle.

He did not move.  
He did not smile.  
He did not say a word.  
He was no longer dead.

Jesse Doiron

# Around & About

If you come across any interesting exhibitions, museums or other places on your travels, share them with us. Call 409-838-5393, or contact us through our web site at [www.artstudio.org](http://www.artstudio.org). Be sure to include the location and dates of the subject, as well as any costs.

Winners in the **BEAUMONT ART LEAGUE'S CLASSICAL FIGURE/3D EXHIBITION 2008** were announced at a reception Aug. 9.

First place in the figure show was awarded to Richard Tallent for "Plancher en Bois." Second place was awarded to Andy Coughlan for "Red Wrap (After Ingres)," and third place was awarded to Alexis Mccarthy for "Figure Study #29."

First place in the 3D show was awarded to Annie Orchard for "Ta-Da." Second place was awarded to Forrest Goodhue for "Industrial Tower," and third place was awarded to Jake Abelman for "Dog Prototype #1."

The juror for both shows was Sandra Laurette. BAL is located at 2675 Gulf Street in Beaumont. For more information, call 409-833-4179 or visit [www.myspace.com/beaumontartleague](http://www.myspace.com/beaumontartleague)

Winners of the **4TH ANNUAL BEAUMONT CAMERA CLUB PHOTO SHOW** results were announced at a reception July 12 at The Beaumont Art League.

First place was awarded to Richard Tallent for "Sonya in Paris." Second place was awarded to Mark Mason for "The Thinker, and third place was awarded to Hank Landry for "Train at Station 4."

Honorable mention went to Candace Carver, Tiffanie Parry, Lief Wallace and Debbie Stanford.

Juror Danny Dubuisson wrote, "Overall, the show is very diverse and technically sound. This was a hard show to judge because of the quality of work. It is very refreshing to see so many people expressing themselves through photography with such a variety of subject matter."

The club meets the first and third Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Beaumont Art League, 2675 Gulf.

For more information about the club, call Matthew Fortenberry at 409-892-6034 or visit [www.beaumontcamerclub.com](http://www.beaumontcamerclub.com)

The **ART MUSEUM OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS** will host **GALA 2008: A BLACK & WHITE EVENING WITH A TOUCH OF COLOR** honoring Beaumont photographer Keith Carter on Sept. 6.

The black-tie event will feature fine dining, entertainment, surprises and much more, Melissa Tilley, AMSET spokesperson, said.

Gala Co-Chairs Ann DeCordova and Colleen Burns were inspired to plan this year's gala with the theme of Black & White with a Touch of Color by Carter's remarkable style of photography, Tilley said. The evening will give patrons the rare occasion to dine in the AMSET galleries amidst Carter's artwork.

"We are so proud to honor Keith Carter at this year's gala," DeCordova said. "He is such an important part of our community and this is a great opportunity to bring people together to recognize his accomplishments."

Burns added, "The annual gala is always an exciting event and a chance for the community to support the museum and ensure its ability to continue offering the wonderful cultural enhancements its programs and exhibitions bring to Southeast Texas."

The evening begins at 6:30 p.m. with cocktails and a silent auction. The auction will feature several fine art pieces including a custom pool cue by Richard Black and photographs by Carter.

Entertainment will be provided by jazz singer Stacey Savino. A seated dinner will be served at 7:45 p.m. In addition, gala attendees will receive special, custom-made party favors that will serve as lasting mementos of the evening, Tilley said.

Tickets begin at \$250 per person or \$2,000 for a table of eight. Patron and Grand Benefactor tickets and tables are also available. Seating is limited.

Call AMSET for reservations at 409-832-3432. Dress is black tie. Proceeds from the event will support AMSET's exhibition and education programs.

The **BLAFFER GALLERY**, the Art Museum of the University of Houston, will present **CELEBUTANTS, GROUPIES, AND FRIENDS: A PHOTOGRAPHIC LEGACY FROM THE ANDY WARHOL FOUNDATION** beginning Sept. 12.

Showcasing a selection of Warhol's personal photographs recently donated to the University of Houston by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the exhibition will be on view from Sept. 13 through Oct. 18. A free opening reception is scheduled for Sept. 12 at 6 p.m.

"For the last ten years of his life, whether he was in his studio or at a party, Warhol always had a small, point-and-shoot Minox or Polaroid camera in hand," Jeffrey Bowen, Blaffer Gallery assistant director of external affairs, said in a press release. "When he died on Feb. 22, 1987, he left behind over 66,000 photographs. In 2008, the Andy Warhol Foundation, the inheritor of the Warhol estate, gifted groups of photographs to institutions across the country, including approximately 150 Polaroids and black-and-white prints to the University of Houston.

Michael Guidry, curator of the UH University Art Collection, said, "The photos are most valuable because they are a rarely seen glimpse into Warhol's working process, especially for his famous portraits. Warhol would take many, many Polaroids of his clients, posing them, putting high contrast make-up on them. Some are very flattering and some not so flattering. Most of the Polaroids were studies for paintings and the black-and-white photos are a mix of travel and party pictures of his friends and social network."

The Blaffer Gallery is located in the Fine Arts Building on the University of Houston's central campus.

For more information, contact Bowen at 713-743-9528.

The Port Arthur Historical Society presents **PLANT ADAPTATION UP CLOSE: A BIOLOGICAL AND ARTISTIC INTERPRETATION** at the **MUSEUM OF THE GULF COAST** through Oct. 19.

A collaboration between the Botanic Garden and Microscopy Facility at Smith College and photographer Joan Wiener, the exhibit features 3-D microscopic images that capture plant adaptations as diverse as clinging to rock cliffs and eating other plants. Seven groups of plants that have adapted themselves to growing under difficult conditions are highlighted: Meat Eaters, Vegetarians, Squatters, Sunbathers, Drifters, Social Climbers, and Guzzlers. Imagine what an insect caught in a Venus flytrap might see. Visitors to the exhibition will use 3-D glasses to view microscopic images that have been magnified more than 2,000 times.

The museum is located at 700 Procter in Port Arthur. For more information, call 409-982-7000, or visit [www.museumofthegulfcoast.org](http://www.museumofthegulfcoast.org)

## THE ART STUDIO 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; furnishing affordable studio space to originating artists of every medium; promoting cultural growth and diversity of all art forms in Southeast Texas; and providing art educational opportunities to everyone, of every age, regardless of income level, race, national origin, sex or religion.

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of The Art Studio, Inc. is to (1) provide educational 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 an area for group work sessions for those artists and crafts people to jointly offer their labor, ideas, and enthusiasm to each other.

#### GOALS

1. To present public exhibitions
2. To provide educational opportunities
3. To provide accessible equipment for artists
4. To provide peer feedback through association with other artists and crafts people

#### OBJECTIVES

1. To present 10 art exhibitions per year
2. To maintain equipment for artists in a safe working environment
3. To provide better access to artists for the public
4. To offer regularly scheduled adult and children's classes
5. To develop and maintain public activities with all sectors of the community
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

SOUTHEAST TEXAS 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

### WENTZ from page 7

to do variations on those designs. It became that I got really obsessed with the free-flowing style and the fact that he loved to draw flowers, women, fruit — anything that had a lot of voluptuous curves."

Wentz calls this style, "Intimism."

"It shows the artist's intimate view of the artist's studio, or of his or a friend's personal home," he said. "An intimate view of how people live in their personal space. We don't have to go somewhere like the Taj Mahal to see great beauty. It's right in anybody's home."

Wentz said it has got to a point where he doesn't know what is coming out of his brush from now on, but what is coming is much more simplified.

"It's a simple, abstract style as if all Matisse is broken down into one, two or three curves and one, two or three colors," he said.

Wentz sorts through the pieces that lay in piles all over his house. As each piece is turned he gives a description of the process. At times he gets quiet, pondering the image and remembering the pleasure of the process. Then he sparks into life and excitedly points out the beauty of a line or the splash of color that suggests the railing on a New Orleans building.

After he left Lamar, Wentz lived in Houston for five years and also lived and worked near Big Sur near San Francisco. It was the late '60s and, while Wentz said he did not consider himself a hippy, "I might as well have been." He said he was right in the thick of the Haight-Asbury scene.

Wentz said that he didn't get into drugs, and many of his hippy friends did not either.

"They were just trying to say, 'America, slow down,'" he said. "Half-a-million dollars every year is just not worth it. You're going to have a heart attack,' you know what I mean?"

"We would get together and talk about how to cook things cheaply — mainly we would have fun," he said. "We were good kids back then."

At the end of the day, Wentz said it was too expensive for him to stay. He supported himself through his art and with a series of jobs.

"I did everything," he said. "I did landscaping, I cleared land, I mowed lawns. But I was very strong. That was when I was between 25 and 35 years old.

"That was the best part of my life."

Wentz reflected wistfully as he shifted slightly in his wheelchair. His quiet doesn't last long.

Wentz said that the best part of the experience was meeting people from different parts of the world.

"I just enjoy people," he said. "Of all the places I have lived, I've learned that all artists are the same. They enjoy spending more time doing their art than being on the job. Because almost no one can make a living off their art. It's been the same with me. I've managed to maintain this house my parents left me. And I shall keep buckling up and getting along, seeing how long I can stay here.

"As long as I stay here, I want my friends to know they are always welcome. They are welcome to come paint with me. I don't hold myself above anyone else. Anyone can paint like me or anybody else, if you just stick with it.

"Practice may not make perfect, but practice can help get on the page a sense of your real self."

Wentz has spent decades practicing. It's just who he is.

### VIEW from page 3

with her eyes clearly set on the future.

#### Extra thoughts

This is a time of cultural downturn. In politics art is a dirty word. And in the community, art is perceived as confusing, insulting and taboo.

Few understand it and fewer care.

All the more reason for The Studio and other visual arts organizations to continue to present art, make art and talk about art. It is also the reason why you, our patrons, need to keep us in your prayers and pocketbooks.

Non-profit organizations all over the country and, of course, across Southeast Texas are suffering. There is no government assistance for nonprofits.

From blood banks to art centers, all of us need your help.

# WE WANT YOU FOR BAND NITE

Hear original music by local musicians LIVE every month at

**September 27 • 7 p.m.**

Live original music by Crazy Ivans, Big Shot Bizarre, Southern Embers and more TBA.

**\$5 admission**

All ages welcome • 21 and up BYOB and have your ID.

To book your band or for more information, visit [www.myspace.com/artstudio](http://www.myspace.com/artstudio)

THE ART STUDIO INC.



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**INSIDE**

- **GEORGE WENTZ**
- **THOUGHTCRIME: MUSINGS FROM AREA POETS**
- **THE BARKING DOG**
- **TASI TENANTS SHOW**

# ISSUE

When you support The Art Studio with your membership, you receive ISSUE, Southeast Texas' and Southwest Louisiana's alternative press as well as class schedules, invitations to opening receptions and various Studio functions.

## 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.

- Bryan Castino
- Katy Hearne
- Heather Eager
- Benee Bernard
- Clint Dearborn
- Rhonda Rodman
- Sue Wright
- Cyndi Grimes
- Rhonda McNally
- Andy Coughlan
- Renee Coughlan
- Olivia Busceme
- Jannell Rigaldo
- Uriah Keneson
- Les Warren
- Torchy
- Colleen Bonnin
- Beth Gallaspy
- Lige
- Joanna Clark
- Chris Dombrowsky

## GRIMES TO HOLD CLAY CLASSES AT TASI

Artist Cyndi Grimes will offer clay classes for two weeks in October, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Dates to be determined.

If you are interested in participating, contact Grimes at [txcynpottery@sbcglobal.net](mailto:txcynpottery@sbcglobal.net)

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



**COUNCIL** *Southeast Texas Arts Council*

## THE ART STUDIO INC. ISSUE DISTRIBUTION POINTS

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THE BARKING DOG	PEARL STREET
BABE DIDRIKSON ZAHARIAS MUSEUM	1750 IH-10E
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BEAUMONT ART LEAGUE (FAIRGROUNDS)	2675 GULF ST
SETAC (IN JULIE ROGERS THEATER)	PEARL STREET @ FORSYTHE
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