

Bay Area Basket Makers Exhibit May 13 - June 4 Opening Reception Saturday May 13 from 5 – 7 p.m.



Practicing an ancient craft, artists will display baskets fashioned from pine needles, kelp, gourds, grasses, palm fibers, and other materials of museum quality pieces of art. This show has become an annual must for serious basket collectors and for anyone seeking an attention-getting accent piece. The exhibit runs through June 4.

The materials used – reeds, rattans, raffia, various tree barks and needles, grasses, kelp, and fruiting date palm stalks – are everyday items from nature that add a natural richness to the baskets. Recognizing these materials in a new context provides a pleasant surprise. The artists also utilize gourds, handmade papers, metals, beads, waxed linens, and even fused glass to enhance their work.

Begun as a non-profit guild in the East Bay in 1984, BABM has grown to include members from Central California to the North Coast, including several locals and some from out-of-state. Over sixty members strong, award-winning BABM members transform easily identified materials into beautiful, highly imaginative conversation stoppers that range from the traditional container to ultra modern abstract fantasies.

Those inspired by the exhibit will find that the group welcomes beginners as well as professionals into a supportive organization that can provide helpful workshops and creative ideas for a \$20 annual membership fee. BABM is affiliated

with the Conference of Northern California Hand-weavers, which includes not only basket makers, but also weavers, dyers, and spinners.

More information is available at the opening night reception from 5 to 7 p.m. at Gualala Arts or on-line by typing in “Bay Area Basket Makers.” Both the Gualala Arts website and the BABM site offer an extensive virtual gallery of baskets. Information is also available by calling the Gualala Arts business office at 884-1138 during normal business hours.

Jeani Martini and Mark Farmer at the Dolphin Gallery Opening Reception May 6 from 5 – 7 p.m.

Aside from differences in technique and skills, and palettes, the greatest determination of distinction between painters, one that is so rarely mentioned, is what the person does between paintings. If the artist is in the habit of daily meditation and the study of spiritual masters, that will automatically show up in the character of the work.

When artists such as Jeani Martini and Mark Farmer immerse themselves daily in the study and appreciation of world of nature, the most ordinary things reveal their own deep spiritual messages in the work. A certain almost indefinable subtlety shines forth from within. Perhaps it is because the close observation of nature teaches one to differentiate, and appreciate, the tiniest changes in pattern or color that permits these artists to bring to view things one might otherwise miss seeing.

Jeani Martini grew up in the hills above Occidental, horseback riding so the great outdoors has always been a part of her life. She started painting in the seventies, but in the nineties she discovered plein-aire painting. Having to be outdoors to do her paintings takes her back to her childhood days and the joy of experiencing nature as if this is the best possible place to be. She also paints in her studio when the weather doesn't comply. “That's when I paint from photos I take of the horses and cows. So far I can't seem to convince them to pose for me!”

One of Jeani's paintings to be in the Dolphin exhibit has this story with it. “In the late 80's and early 90's my husband and I fished the Gualala River every winter for Steelhead. We would float down from Twin Bridges to Switchville in our drift boat. There was this man who was always fishing with this adorable dog. When the man went to his pick-up to grab a cup of coffee, his dog would sit by the fishing pole, to guard it until the man came back. I was so moved that I painted a picture of it, and called it “The Pole Sitter.” I have since wondered who that man was, and what the name of his dog was. To the person who can tell me who they are will be given five matted-farmable note cards of images of my paintings.”

Also, to celebrate this exhibit, Jeani had the idea of raffling off one of her paintings. There is nothing to buy. Just your name and comments about the show on a slip of paper will qualify you for the drawing done on the last day of the show – June 1.

Due to a change in venue, Mark Farmer is quickly jumping in to fill the void. He will be showing his fine ceramic vessels done mostly in black with subtle variations in white and ivory designs, which with great serendipity, respond to some of the black and white works of Jeani Martini. Watch for more information and photos of Mark Farmer's bowls and vases.

