

Moraga Art Gallery Presents Fiesta Time

By Andrea A. Firth



Connie Robertson stands by her whimsical clocks in the Moraga Art Gallery

Photo Andrea A. Firth

It's fiesta time at the Moraga Art Gallery. And with the vibrant colors employed by the two Lamorinda artists featured—Connie Robertson and Angelica Samame—in this summer exhibit, the Gallery looks like it is ready for a fun party.

Artist Connie Robertson moved to Moraga from Perth, Australia about eight years ago to join her daughter Heather Metcalf, who is also an artist. “My mother started creating pottery in her mid-seventies. Before that she was too busy raising children and working full-time to do any art,” explains Metcalf who is a great supporter of her mother’s late-life career in art. However, as time went on and a bit of osteoarthritis set in, Robertson found making pottery a challenge. “I was working with clay, but it was getting too heavy for me,” explains Robertson.

At that point Metcalf suggested that her mother join her in taking a glass fusing class. “I think she attended two classes,” says Metcalf. “From there she bought a kiln, a grinder, and glass saw, and she was off,” she adds. That was five years ago when Robertson was 82 years old. Since then she has created hundreds of brightly colored glass pieces experimenting in jewelry and most recently in designing and making clocks.

Robertson has created brightly colored fused glass in the shape of fish, cats and other forms, which serve as the clockfaces for the battery-operated wall and desk clocks. “What she is doing is very unique. These clocks are incredible things,” states Robertson’s proud daughter. The clocks are colorful, whimsical, and playful which appears to contrast with Robertson’s beige-colored clothing and demure nature. But her daughter explains, “Actually, these clocks are very characteristic of my mother. She has great sense of humor.”

Artist Angelica Samame began to live her passion

for art later in life as well. Although she always wanted to be an artist, raising four children sidelined Samame’s artistic endeavors. But as she describes, “the seed was there”, and she began to focus seriously on her art about eight years ago when child number four left the nest. Working mainly with acrylic paints, Samame’s paintings show beautifully dressed women in vibrant colors enjoying life.”

Samame, who is originally from Peru, lived in Moraga for 27 years before recently moving to Walnut Creek. “I think my art has some routes in Peruvian culture. I paint mostly from my imagination.” Samame branched out into a new medium this past year—papier mache. “I used to make dolls by hand when I was young. So I really enjoy creating with papier mache.” In addition to her acrylic paintings, the exhibit includes a few of Samame’s papier mache creations including a life-size doll and clown.

Fiesta Time will be on display at the Moraga Art Gallery, 570 Center Street (Rheem Shopping Center) through August 17th.