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# Orinda Library Gallery-Free and Easy

*By Andrea A. Firth*

With a new exhibit on display every four to five weeks, the Orinda Library Gallery is one of the most happening art venues around town. Sponsored by the Orinda Arts Council, the Library Gallery showcases artists from throughout Lamorinda and the Bay Area. "[The Gallery] is one of our gifts to the community," states Myrna Witt, a past president of the Orinda Arts Council and the current curator of the Gallery. Established when the library was built seven years ago, the Gallery provides a free and accessible forum for both adults and children to regularly view new works by artists in the community and surrounding area. "Art is a civilizing force in our community," states Witt, whose passion for art and outreach are interwoven. "It's important for children to see art and different approaches.Art gives us a chance to look at things in a different way." The Gallery has two different kinds of hanging systems that enable the Arts Council to effectively use the space on the high walls in the hallway. "This Gallery can accommodate larger pieces," explains Witt. "There is room for scope and flexibility with exhibits in this space," she adds. And, the artists seem to be lining up at the door to get in. The Gallery has shows booked out almost a year in advance. "The artists want to be in the Gallery-they call us," states Witt. In addition to the rotating exhibits which change regularly, the Arts Council hosts a few annual shows including the Lamorinda High School Visual Arts Competition which highlights the artistic works of students throughout the community. The Orinda Library Gallery's current show is another annual event featuring art from the Oakland Art Association-a collection of artists from both sides of the tunnel including several members from Lamorinda. This is a juried show with works in a variety of media including paintings, drawings, photography, collage, monoprints, and etchings. Moraga resident Gisela Volkmer received a 3rd place award for her watercolor entitled Homage to the Ancient Ones. The Oakland Art Association show will remain on display at the Orinda Gallery through September 17th. The Gallery hours are Monday through Thursday from 10 am to 8 pm; Friday and Saturday from 10 am to 6 pm; and Sundays from 1pm to 5pm.

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