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Andrew Denman-A Master of Art and the Business of Art

By Andrea A. Firth



Andrew Denman in his studio Photos provided

"Ever since I was a very young child I was always fascinated with animals. I loved going to the zoo and animal parks," says Andrew Denman. And, the now thirty-two year old Orinda resident has translated his passion for life in the outdoors to a successful career as an artist focusing on wildlife, especially birds, along with landscapes, still life, and portraits. Nationally recognized for his wildlife art, Denman will host his first studio show April 24th through May 8th. Exhibit goers can see Denman's art at a public reception on Saturday 1st from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. or by appointment starting on April 24th (see below for contact details).

Denman decided to organize his own studio exhibit somewhat out of necessity after Pacific Wildlife Galleries in Lafayette, which had displayed his work for 16 years, closed its doors. But Denman took the change in stride, "It was an opportunity to take my life and future in my own hands," he says. "I was raised to be very practical which can be difficult as an artist. I understand the reality of what it takes to make a living as an artist," he adds. After working for years to build a strong local clientele and collector base, Denman did not want to turn those relationships directly over to another gallery, so he brought the gallery in house-literally.

"The exhibit will not be like a typical open studio event," explains Denman whose studio is located in his home at 20 Parkway Court in Orinda. He is converting his studio and an adjacent room into a gallery-like exhibit space to suitably display over 25 new paintings. "I really encourage people to call to set up some time to see the exhibit outside of the reception," says Denman noting that this often allows people time to view the work in a relaxed setting with greater access to him.

"It's challenging to make a living as an artist," acknowledges Denman, still he remains pragmatic and undaunted. It takes him about two years to create the artwork and prepare for a show, which he says requires budgeting, foresight, and planning. While Denman generates some other income from teaching and speaking, it's really his artwork that pays the bills, and in this economic climate he finds

that it is essential to know how to reach your market.

"It's all about communicating with your collector base," says Denman. He has effectively used electronic marketing tools to promote this show to his own mailing list. Prior to the show opening, he has already sold a few of the paintings through his online efforts.

"This is the time to cater to your existing clientele," adds Denman who has also launched a quarterly e-newsletter to stay connected with his patrons. "E-marketing is very affordable for anyone running a business and may be the better way to reach young buyers." His message to other artists: "Take control of your own outreach. It's more feasible than you realize and keeps overhead low."

"My work appeals to a fairly broad range of people," says Denman, whose medium is acrylic on board. The exhibit will feature a variety of wildlife subjects including local and exotic birds, big cats, marine mammals, and primates, all approached with the artist's unique hyper-realism, stylization, and abstraction. Denman gathers countless photographs and other reference materials and combines these images to create an overall image that is more detailed than a photograph and juxtaposes this more than real image with impressionistic, modern, and more loosely painted backgrounds and elements.

Denman's exhibit also ventures outside his predictable genre and includes a stunning black and white portrait of his sister peeking out through some oleander bushes and a playful painting of a bare-chested friend with a chicken propped on his head. "I don't buy into a really narrow focus. I have always failed to edit myself," he says, adding that the exhibit will appeal to, "Anyone who is interested in wildlife, art, and the necessity to take a moment out to pause, breathe, and enjoy the outside world."

Andrew Denman's Solo Exhibit 2010 runs from April 24th through May 8th at his studio, 20 Parkway Court in Orinda. To arrange a viewing, call 925.258.9342. A public reception will be held on

Saturday, May 1st from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

For more information, go to

<http://andrewdenman.com>.



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