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## Experience Art This Summer at Local Galleries

By Sophie Braccini



From left, Carol Aust leans close to one of Laura Van Duren's sculptures. Photo Ohlen Alexander

Have an appreciation for art and the artists behind the work? If so, you're in luck this summer, with a wealth of opportunities to view, mix and mingle with a wide range of wonderful artists displaying their works in Lafayette, at the Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery, Lafayette Art Gallery and Klein Gallery, in Moraga at the Saint Mary's College Museum of Art and the Moraga Art Gallery, and in Orinda at Alison McCrady Fine Arts.

Described by clients as being on par with San Francisco art galleries, Jennifer Perlmutter was quite pleased with the excitement generated by the opening of the new art exhibit, "Belonging," which runs through July 19 in her Lafayette gallery. She is inviting art lovers to an artist talk with "Belonging" exhibitors Laura VanDuren and Carol Aust from 7 to 9 p.m. Saturday, June 21. "People like to hear about the artists and ask them questions," she says. After the artist talk and wine tasting, there will be an open floor discussion for anyone who

would like to share a story or words about belonging. "We don't know for how long we're here; whatever we have to contribute, we should contribute it now," says Perlmutter.

Participation is part of the show itself. "Laura VanDuren's sculptures and installation explore stories about our perception of home, with work you can actually get inside," adds Perlmutter. "Visitors are invited to write on the inside of the installations, thus becoming part of the art." The gallery owner says that Carol Aust's work, acrylic on canvas and wood panels from her studio in Oakland, expresses the human need for connection and belonging and the difficulty of achieving either.

"Every time I go into [Jennifer Perlmutter Gallery], I see something new and the art makes me feel happy and contented," says Lafayette resident Lucie Hird. "There is so much to see and the collages particularly have endless meaning in them. The gallery is different from anywhere else in Lafayette. It offers culture and originality. A place to express yourself. She adds that there have been group collaborative evenings where each person was involved in making a piece of art together, and also a collage evening, and several showings of other artists' work. "The benefits to the community are guaranteed," she says.

"It is important for me to explore what it means to belong to a community," says Perlmutter. "This is how this show was constructed; through sculpture and paintings, it explores identity, home and our relation to it."

In Orinda, every second Sunday of the month from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. this summer, Allison McCrady, owner of Allison McCrady Fine Arts is expanding the confines of her gallery and inviting recognized local artists to mingle and show their work throughout Theatre Square.

"People love to meet the artists and get to experience their work in a more intimate way," says McCrady. "Every second Sunday this summer, about 10 local recognized artists will be present in Theatre Square (where McCrady has her gallery) with their work." The first of the series was on June 8, and the gallery owner says that despite the heat, the attendance was good and artists were happy with the results.

"Among the artists present was contemporary photographer Anne Rabe who will soon be the featured artist in the gallery for the first time," says McCrady. Rabe is a Lafayette resident who

presents her work on metal, wood or other media. "Anne has work on display at the San Jose Art Museum," adds McCrady. An opening reception is scheduled June 20 at the gallery at 2 Theatre Square in Orinda.

#### Other Lamorinda Exhibitions to Visit This Summer

"Virtuosity Goes Viral" at the Lafayette Art Gallery with painter, Carla W Gelbaum jewelry designer, Karin Lechner, and ceramic artist David VanderJagt at 3420 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite A, Lafayette.

"Luminous - Nature Revealed and Reimagined," highlighting the often fleeting, yet immortalized, beauty of the natural world through floral photographs by resident artist Lucy Beck, and fruit and vegetable bowls and jewelry by guest artist Margaret Dorfman at the Moraga Art Gallery. The show runs through Aug. 9 at 522 Center Street in the Rheem Shopping Center.

"Orchestra of Time," which runs through Aug. 8 at the Klein Gallery in Lafayette, featuring Erik Bender and Jeslyn Cantrell. An Artist Reception, an evening of local art, live jazz, wine, food and happiness, is scheduled for Friday, June 20 from 6 to 8:30 p.m. The gallery is located at 50 Lafayette Circle in Lafayette. (See story below)

"Dale Chihuly: Venetians," 67 works from the celebrated contemporary glass artist on loan from the George R. Stroemple Collection through July 20 at the Saint Mary's College Museum of Art, with three other new exhibitions. For information, call (925) 631-4379 or visit [stmarys-ca.edu/museum](http://stmarys-ca.edu/museum).

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[back](#)

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