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Art show at Orinda Books celebrates instinct to stick together

By Kara Navolio



Cassie Tzur of Walnut Creek attended the artist's reception for "The Herd Instinct" on display at Orinda Books.

Photo Kara Navolio

"The Herd Instinct," the newest art exhibit on display at Orinda Books, speaks to the instinct we all have to come together. Most of the paintings feature animals, from cows to ladybugs and whales to jellyfish, in various groupings, sometimes in a whimsical manner.

Bay Area Studio Artists provided the works for this show, which will run through Oct. 31. BASA, a group of Bay Area women who have been painting together for 11 years, meet on Thursdays and Saturdays at Marcy Wheeler's studio in Walnut Creek. They have exhibited together throughout the Bay Area and at several locations in Napa.

The current exhibit features large and small canvases by group members Suzun Almquist, Jeanette Baird, Ellen Reintjes, Sharon Tama, Joanne Taueffer, and

Wheeler, along with two guest artists, Ruth Stanton and Lassie Colbourn.

"Marcy is the mentor of the group," stated Tama. "After we paint, we have critique sessions which enhance the experience for everyone."

Almquist added, "Marcy creates a safe environment to critique. We trust each other, and each artist's work becomes better as a result."

Everyone in the group paints what they enjoy painting. The group then examines everyone's work and how it might fit together for a theme. Once a theme is decided upon, others in the group might paint a work specifically for the theme.

"Some of my most important life work has been working with these women (in BASA)," stated Wheeler. "We each have our own

strengths that we bring together in this group." The group has even made some collaborative large scale paintings where each member paints a few small canvases that are brought together at the end to create one large piece. A favorite was one of Robin Williams that can be seen on the group's website: www.bayareastudioartists.com.

Maria Rowland, owner of Orinda Books, is proud to provide a venue for local artists to show their work, something the store has been doing for many years now. Each show runs for one month, and her schedule is booked through 2019.

"The artist's reception is something that I added after I bought the store," explained Rowland. "It's a great chance for the artists to talk about their work and kick off each show." For more information, visit www.orindabooks.com.

New vision of education explored in film, 'Beyond Measure'

By David O'Connell



Photo provided

The Saklan School will host a screening of Vicki Abel's latest film, "Beyond Measure," on Oct. 18 at the Lafayette Veterans Hall. Abel's earlier film, "Race to Nowhere," chronicled the problems with the U.S. educational system that is often transfixed on test scores, competitive college admissions and plowing through a curriculum a mile wide, but an inch deep. Abel does what students are asked to do when they come across a problem: Do not just tell me about the problem; come to me with a solution.

In "Beyond Measure," Abel travels across the country discovering schools that have a new vision of education. She speaks with educators, parents and most importantly students, asking viewers to reconsider the purpose of education. What if our education system valued personal growth over test scores? Put inquiry over mimicry? Encouraged passion over rankings? What if we decided that the higher aim of school was not the transmis-

sion of facts or formulas, but the transformation of every student? And what if this paradigm-shift was driven from the ground up?

"Beyond Measure" speaks to the idea that schools should be places that are academic, but also require students to play a role in the design of their education – a place where students develop a love of learning by leading their own learning, a place where intrinsic curiosity is fostered, creating a passion for learning, a place where students develop the courage to try new things as well as the courage to fail.

Anyone interested in helping shape the future of education is invited to attend the showing 6:30 p.m. Oct. 18 at the Lafayette Veterans' Hall. Tickets are available at Saklan.org.

Direct link to the ticket site: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/beyond-measure-presented-by-the-saklan-school-tickets-48037453316>.

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