

Boulder's homeless display their art

By Teague Anderson, For the Camera
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BOULDER, Colo. — Boulder Arts & Crafts Gallery this month will be displaying the artistic side of more than 20 people from Boulder's homeless community. An official opening reception will be held Friday from 6 to 8 p.m., with Whole Foods and Divine Wine providing food and beverages, and local band "Holly and her Husbands" playing music.



"By the Pond" — a watercolor painting created by a homeless man named "Lucas" — will be one of more than 20 art pieces on display tonight at the Boulder Arts & Crafts Gallery.

The artists are part of an art program run by the Boulder Carriage House Community Table -- a day-shelter for the homeless. With the help of Susan Stephens -- a volunteer art teacher -- people can come to the shelter and focus on something other than their troubles, if only for a couple hours.

In addition to displaying the creativity of Boulder's homeless, the artwork is also for sale, with half of the proceeds going to the artists. The other half goes partly to supporting the gallery, and partly toward a donation back to the Carriage House. The exhibit has been running since March 4, and several pieces have been sold already, but they will remain on display for the remainder of the month.

Most of the artwork is watercolor and pastel, but there are also pencil drawings, needlepoint and wood sculptures.

This show is actually the second for the artists who participate in the Carriage House's program.

"We had heard that the Carriage House had a successful event at Zing Hair Salon last year," said Lisa McDonough, the exhibit organizer at the Boulder Arts & Crafts Gallery. "And just about the time when we were about to approach them, they approached us to see if their artists could hang their work in a real gallery."

Every piece of artwork was sold at the Zing Hair Salon show.

"The artists felt so good -- you could see the change in their postures when their artwork was being praised and appreciated," said Joy Eckstine, executive director at the Boulder Carriage House Community Table.

Eckstine sees the value of art as a different way for people to express themselves.

"There are a lot of people where verbal expression isn't their best means," she said. "People go through so many support systems that use the same methods, and this gives them a different way to address their issues."

The Boulder Arts & Crafts Gallery encourages people to come see this unique event.

"Being an artist myself," said McDonough, "I think about how uplifting art can be when you're challenged by your world, and I'm just so happy that we could provide a space for these people to see their work in a gallery. And even if we just provide a little bit of happiness, I think that goes a long way."