

# river arts

## The Enriched Experience DISCOVERIES IN THE RIVER ARTS DISTRICT

BY GREG VINEYARD

As I pondered my June column about hidden things one can find in the River Arts District, I thought to myself: "Well, if they're secret, how will I look for them?"

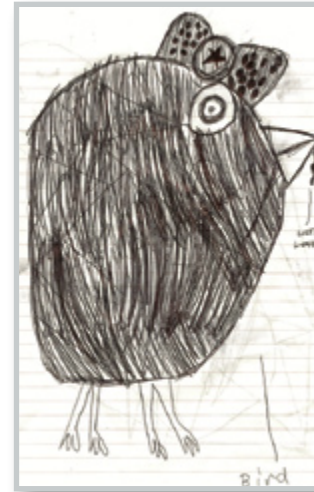
It's sorta like trying to look up "pteradactyl" in the dictionary if you don't already know how to spell it. Or "knight". Or "herb". Or "Klingon". (Although admittedly with "Klingon" you have a 50-50 chance of guessing it begins with either a "k" or a "c". But Klingons have their own dictionary, further complicating the matter.)

First to my mind were logical discoveries, like History. The old buildings are fascinating, each with its own story. Brick and mortar art businesses are the current tenants in structures from the era of tanneries, ice houses and cotton mills. I sometimes wonder what Constance Williams Gallery, built in 1916 by Standard Oil, looked like back then as I sit at night carving tiles while the rumbling train's headlights cast eerie yet comforting shadows across our working studio.

I also thought about Stuff. The variety of artistic offerings is nearly limitless -- people are often surprised to find they can, as I often say, "Decorate Your Life". Each stop reveals something new as they follow the map and explore.

And one can certainly find Information, and sometimes that is new, too. Like how the artists and their food-venue friends are just four or so minutes from downtown, depending on red lights en route. And that even on Sundays one can find work by over 50 artists, because several buildings are open seven days a week. Another pleasant surprise is that it's OK to ask the artists how they do what they do, as questions are welcome.

Looking deeper, it's evident that artists and visitors alike have Wonderful Moments. Like peace while wandering through an inspiring gallery. And the pleasure of journaling with a cup of tea in a favorite coffee house. Or perhaps processing a thought



**Black Bird by an inspired and inspiring visitor.**

while walking in a meditation circle or garden.

Enjoyable Connections are to be found, too. Due to that "Field Of Dreams"-instilled vision we have here, I've had interactive conversations with folks from all over about art, community and life in general. People's earnest, energetic descriptions about their lives, what drew them to Asheville and how much they like the working studios are stimulating. A serious talk about art therapy with friends

from Mississippi sparked my little gray cells. A meeting with folks from Chapel Hill fueled forward thinking; not just because we enjoyed each other's company, but also because I was given a fantastic drawing by one of their kids. Some of the best gifts are exchanges of information and ideas, and as simple as an inspired image on lined notebook paper.

I suggest here to you that the biggest hidden surprise is right in front of us: PEOPLE. It is us. It's our visitors. It's the feelings we feel, the art we ingest and the yet-to-be-discovered things we find ourselves reacting to and sharing about.

The Studio Stroll is a great way to meet all 150+ artists at the same time, get the lay of the land, and enjoy art and friends. Coming back time and again is a great way to keep enriching the experience and to unfold more secrets.

See you at Studio Stroll!



**Greg Vineyard is an artist and creative consultant in Asheville's River Arts District. He and his Ceramics for Contemplation & Connectivity can be found at Constance Williams Gallery (the middle building in CURVE), 9 Riverside Dr. Open seven days 11-4. Visit [creativewayfinding.byregion.net](http://creativewayfinding.byregion.net)**

22



*Take time to visit a few of the River Arts District's wonderful, independently owned, "Asheville Grown" businesses.*

From the 2010 Studio Stroll. Photo by Lynne Harty

BEVERLY KIES

GAYLE PAUL

TODD FOWLER

JERRY CRAM

# Celebrating Local Art

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**B**

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June 10 • 11 • 12  
Friday 12-4  
Saturday 10-6  
Sunday 10-6  
Reception • Friday 5-7  
Spruce Pine TRAC Gallery

# 2011

## Toe River Studio Tour

Mitchell • Yancey Counties  
Western North Carolina

From left: Kathleen Turczyn, Lisa Gluckin, Simona Rosasco



# river arts district studio stroll

## River Arts District Studio Stroll

Saturday & Sunday, June 11-12, 2011

If you haven't visited the River Arts District in Asheville recently, you are in for a HUGE SURPRISE.

Over 150 artists now have their studios in the District. Many of them are open every day, but the best time to see all of them is during the Studio Stroll on Saturday and Sunday, June 11 and 12.

The first, largest, and most walkable tour of working artists' studios in the region, the River Arts District Studio Stroll takes place in 19 historic buildings along the French Broad River. There will be artists' demonstrations and hands-on activities throughout the weekend.

Sprinkled throughout the District are lots of new places to eat, drink, see a performance or just hang out. Try some nationally renowned barbeque, organic juices and teas, tacos, or great-tasting local food. Try



Catch the trolley at Riverview Station.

BY JENNY MOORE

Asheville's famous microbrews at The Wedge.

Getting to and around in the River Arts District is a breeze. Accessible by car from Downtown, West Asheville, and Biltmore Village, there is

plenty of parking. Catch the trolley at Riverview Station or any of the stops listed on the map. An Information Booth is located at the 5-points intersection of Depot St. across from the Clingman Café.

IF YOU GO

River Arts District Studio Stroll, Saturday, June 11 and Sunday, June 12 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. both days. Check [www.riverartsdistrict.com](http://www.riverartsdistrict.com) for hours, directions, more information, or to download a map of the District.



From the 2010 Studio Stroll. Photos by Lynne Harty



Encaustic Demonstration



November 2010

### RIVER ARTS STUDIO BUILDINGS

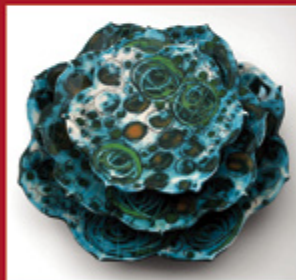
- \* 240 Clingman
- \* 347 Depot
- \* 97 Roberts Street
- \* Cotton Mill Studios
- \* CURVE studios
- \* Galaxy Studios
- \* Hatchery Studios
- \* Northlight Studios
- \* Odyssey Center
- \* The Old Wood Co
- \* Phil Mechanic
- \* Pink Dog Creative
- \* Riverside Studios
- \* Riverview Station
- \* Roberts St. Studios
- \* Roots Studios
- \* Studio 375 Depot
- \* The Wedge
- \* Warehouse Studios

River Arts District | Asheville, NC

## CONSTANCE WILLIAMS GALLERY & WORKING ARTIST STUDIOS



Jenny Mastin



Angelique Tassistro



Constance Williams



Greg Vineyard



Cassie Ryalls

Our Working Studios  
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Encaustic & Acrylic Paintings | Sculptural, Functional & Conceptual Clay | Jewelry | Metal Works | Steel Furniture | Mixed-Media  
And More by a Dozen Local Artists | Monthly Show Openings | Workshops | Special Events

9 Riverside Drive, Asheville, NC 28801 The middle building in CURVE studios & garden, across from 12 Bones Smokehouse  
[www.ConstanceWilliamsGallery.com](http://www.ConstanceWilliamsGallery.com) [info@ConstanceWilliamsGallery.com](mailto:info@ConstanceWilliamsGallery.com) 828 225 1762



# river arts district studio stroll

## Constance Williams Gallery & Working Studios

When you enter Constance Williams Gallery & Working Studios, you are immersed in the sensory, creative world of a dozen local artists. Constance's encaustics -- painted using a heat-fused mixture of pure beeswax, damar tree resin and wax paint colors -- are created right before your eyes in her in-the-round studio right on the main show floor, and her abstracts, landscapes and tree scenes simply



Constance Williams

glow on the walls, luminous and welcoming.

Constance is also a hand-built clay sculptor, and her ceramic studio is upstairs above the gallery alongside on-site studio artists Jenny Mastin, Cassie Ryalls, Angelique Tassistro and Greg Vineyard. Jenny's clay sculptures bridge a sacred dialogue between the

physical and spiritual worlds, referencing cultural myth, folklore, legend and observation. Cassie's "Souls" and clay sculptures

explore human relationships and interactions, connection through anonymity and the very nature of existence.

Angelique's functional wares break the rules of fashion, whimsically combining colors, patterns and figures with glaze and decals, evoking the magic times of favorite childhood memories. Greg's out-of-round meditation bowls and communication animal series, along with tactile tile designs, are about connecting with self, each other and spirit.

You will also find work for sale by local artists Phil DeAngelo (acrylics), Mary Farmer (encaustics), Patty Bilbro (functional illustrated clay), Lucile Stephens (paintings,



clay and mixed-media), Mystery Masiello (crystal and silver jewelry), Kelly Prestwood (metal works for home and garden) and Cynthia Wynn (industrial steel furniture).

Constance Williams Gallery also hosts encaustic painting workshops, events and opens a new show the second Saturday of every month in their "gallery-within-a-gallery".

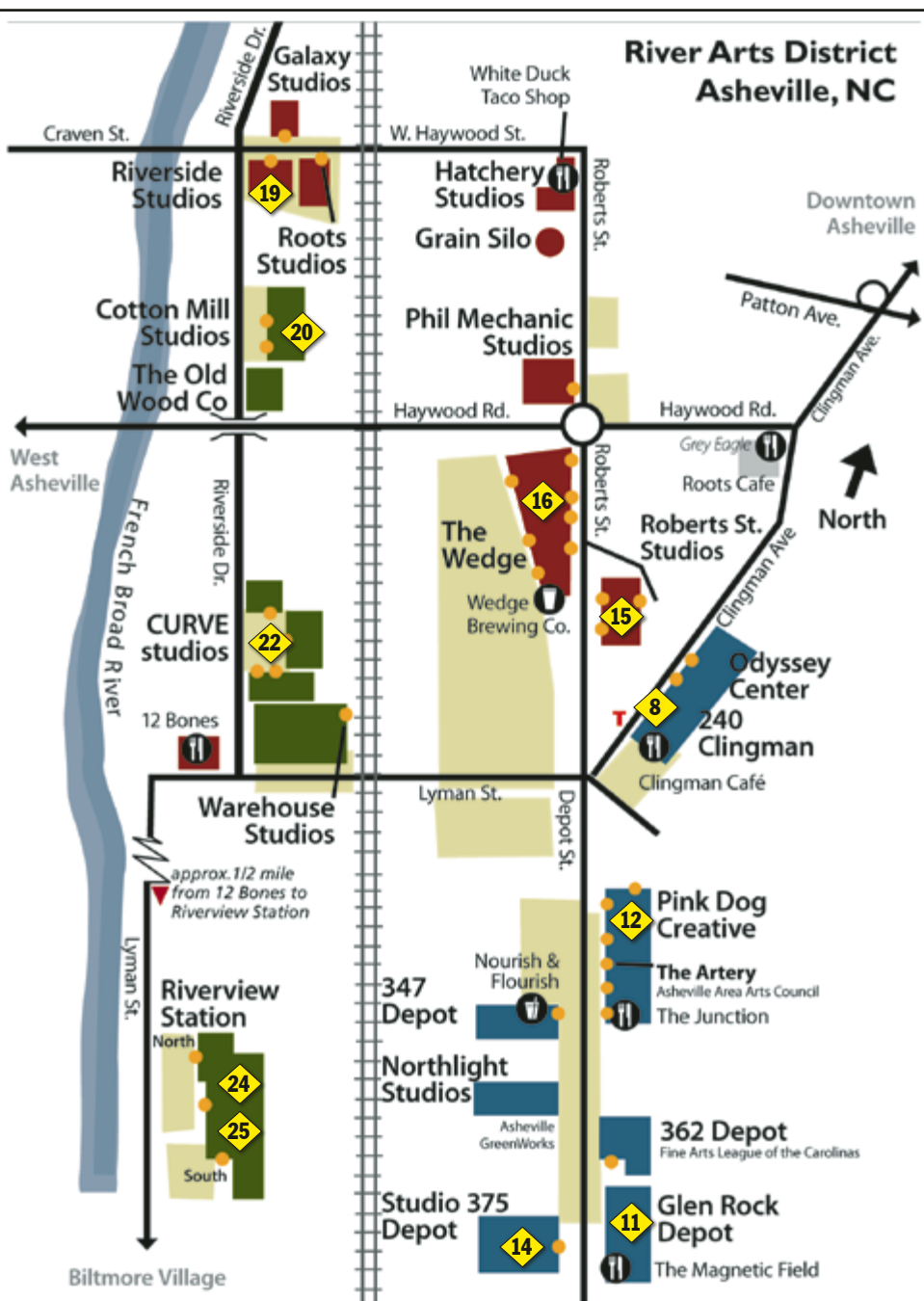
Come meet the artists, ask questions and share a story or two. Constance Williams Gallery is open to the public seven days a week, and is located at 9 Riverside Drive, across the street from 12 Bones Smokehouse.



Upstairs studios.

[www.constancewilliamsgallery.com](http://www.constancewilliamsgallery.com)  
[info@constancewilliamsgallery.com](mailto:info@constancewilliamsgallery.com)  
 (828) 225-1762

22



## HISTORY OF ASHEVILLE'S RIVER ARTS DISTRICT

Asheville's River Arts District has been evolving for the past 25 years. A group of dedicated artists, landowners and businesses have laid claim to a neglected section of Asheville's riverfront and are calling it home. The first arts based business to locate in what is now the River Arts District was Highwater Clays. They moved from Biltmore Village in 1985, to the current home of Gennett Lumber.

In 1987, Porge & Lewis Buck were the first artists to actually buy a building in the Asheville RAD, which they named Warehouse Studios. In 1989, Patti Torno bought what is now CURVE studios & garden to make a punk rock club called Squashpile. The club lived in #6 CURVE for two years, after which all three CURVE studios & garden buildings were renovated to make the first live/work studio spaces in the River Arts District.

The early 1990's saw a migration of artists out of downtown into what was the Chesterfield Mill. The first Studio Stroll took place in 1994 and included such notable artists as Kevin Hogan and Cathy

Triplett. In 1995, the Chesterfield Mill was consumed by fire, as was most of the old Cotton Mill. Some of the remnants of the Cotton Mill were renovated into more live/work studio spaces in 1996. The building was purchased by Marty and Eileen Black in 2003 and renamed Cotton Mill Studios.

1995 was also the year that Highwater Clays purchased 238-242 Clingman Ave., now home to Odyssey Center for the Ceramic Arts, Odyssey Gallery & Studios, Jonas Gerard Fine Art (2007) and the Clingman Cafe (2004). The Grey Eagle Music Hall re-located to Clingman Avenue in 1999, becoming the first music venue in the River Arts District. The flood in 2004 destroyed the Home Cooking Cafe, which inadvertently made room for 12 Bones Smokehouse (2005).

The unique aspect of Asheville's River Arts District is ownership. Most of the buildings that house artist studios in the ARAD are owned by artists. The Asheville Area Riverfront Redevelopment Commission, formed in 2010, has worked to encourage an organic, homegrown approach to our riverfront that has served the area well.

[WWW.RIVERARTSDISTRICT.COM](http://WWW.RIVERARTSDISTRICT.COM)



# river arts district studio stroll

## Jonas Gerard Paints Live DURING THE BI-ANNUAL STUDIO STROLL

Come join us during the bi-annual studio stroll on Saturday and Sunday, starting at 2 p.m. each day, as artist Jonas Gerard paints live! Saturday he will paint along with the River Guerguerian Project and Sunday he will offer his own compilation of musical tunes and harmony.

These improvisational musical painting performances are the perfect setting for all true music and art lovers.

Jonas' gestural energy and theatrical style of painting combined with the River Guerguerian Project's ecstatic and engaging



Jonas paints while the River Guerguerian Project performs.

energetic vocalist and spunk that cannot be missed. And, the Mark Guest Quartet will play on Sunday, June 12, offering a more laid back groove for easy afternoon listening. Both are superb!

As part of a fun-filled event full of music, dancing, painting, and connecting, the gallery will provide light refreshments, wine, and non-alcoholic beverages throughout the day.

So come witness this uplifting exchange of energy between all of these incredible performers as this transformation of music, painting, and the experience itself comes to life – right here in the heart of Asheville's River Arts District. This amazing compilation of artists is

something for everyone to enjoy!



Jonas' energy engages the audience.

interpretation of music make for an experience worth seeing!

Jonas' spontaneous style of painting, based on abstract expressionism, infuses his paintings with life, movement, and color, reflecting his passionate outlook on life. With his Brazilian/Parisian ancestry and an extensive 50 years of experience behind him, he has developed a wide variety of mediums, allowing him to flow effortlessly with fresh ideas that emerge and inspire all.

River Guerguerian is also joined by an incredible group of talented artists/musicians: improv vocalist Sage Sansone, (who is also part of the gallery family), multi-instrumentalist Chris Rosser, and Jake Wolf on the fusion bass guitar.

In addition, the gallery will also be featuring two other bands. 42nd Street will play on Saturday, June 11, with a vivacious and



The Jonas Gerard gallery and studio.



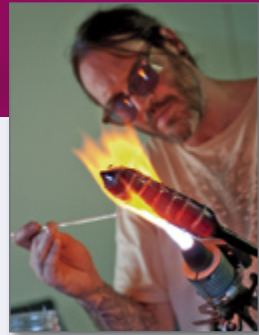
Jonas Gerard's gallery and studio are located at 240 Clingman Avenue. Phone (828) 350-7711.

The Stroll hours are from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday.

For more information, please visit us at [www.jonasgerard.com](http://www.jonasgerard.com)

8

## River Arts District Studio Stroll DEMONSTRATIONS & ACTIVITIES



Glass Blowing 2010  
Photo by Lynne Harty

### 8 240 Clingman Avenue

Jonas Gerard – 42nd Street Jazz Band, Sat. 12-2 and 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Jonas Gerard – Live Painting Demo with River Guerguerian Project, Sat. 2-3:30 p.m.

Mark Guest Trio, Sun, 12-2 and 3:30-4:30 p.m. Jonas Painting Demo w/ Music, Sun. 2-3:30 p.m.

### 20 Cotton Mill Studios

The Potter's Mark Studio – Wheel Demos, Sat. & Sun. all day.

Margaret Cogswell – Tiny Mailbox Exhibition, Sat. & Sun. from 10-6 p.m.

Sutherland Handweaving Studio – Hands-on Weaving Demos, Sat. & Sun. all day.

The Hop – Selling Ice Cream, Sat. & Sun. all day.

### 22 CURVE Studios

Akira Satake – Handles for Teapots Demo, Sat. & Sun. all day.

Music. Sat. & Sun. on and off.

Constance Williams Gallery – Clay & Encaustic Demos, Sat. & Sun., all day.

Odyssey Center – Wheel and Handbuilding Demos, Sat. & Sun. all day.

### 12 Pink Dog Creative

Holly de Saillan – Mosaic Art Demo, Sat. 11-4 p.m.

### 19 Riverside Studios

Sherrod Barnes-Ginifer – Handbuilding Clay Head Demo, Sat. & Sun. 3 p.m.

### 24 Riverview Station

Village Potters – Potters Wheel Demos, Sat. & Sun. 12-4 p.m. Children of all ages can try the wheel, Sat. & Sun. 1-3 p.m.

### 19 Roots Studios

Lynn Stanley – Sumi-e Asian Brush Painting Demo, Sat. & Sun. 1-2 p.m. Hands-on for adults and children accompanied by adults.

### 14 Studio 375 Depot

Jewelry Making Demos, Sat. & Sun. from 12-4 p.m.

Brandy & Dave/Planet Art – Chair Caning, Sat. & Sun. all day.

MacKensie King – Enameling Demo, Sat. & Sun. 1:30 & 3:30 p.m.

Dawn Dalto – Clay Handbuilding Demo, Sat. all day.

Les Powell – Wheel Throwing Demos, Sun. all day.

### 11 The Glen Rock

Magnetic Field – Open Special Hours Sat. 10-2 p.m., and Sun. 10-5 p.m. *The Witches Quorum* (play) Sat., 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m.

Faces of Asheville – Exhibition & Meet the Artist, Sat. & Sun. 10-4 p.m.

### 16 The Wedge

Perez Art Studio – Clay Sculpture Demo, Sat. & Sun. at 12, 2, and 4 p.m.

What is The Witches' Quorum?

Either what you've always wanted theatre to be, or have always been afraid theatre could be.

JUNE 2-25 AT THE MAGNETIC FIELD  
372 Depot Street, Asheville

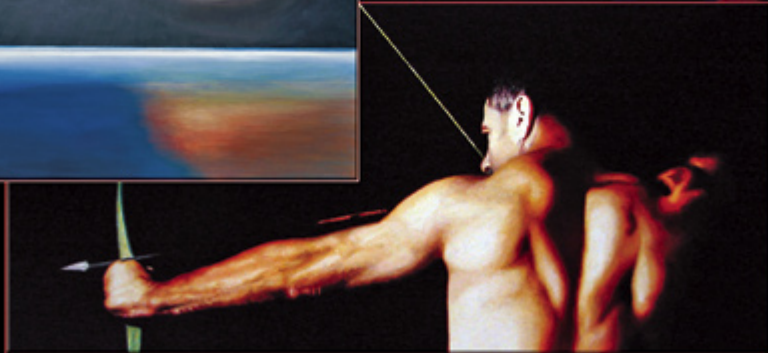
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R A P I D R I V E R A R T S

## river arts

### Jeff Pittman

**R**esiding in the beautiful mountains of Asheville North Carolina, Jeff Pittman is never short on inspiration for his colorful oil paintings.

He is primarily known for his dramatic skies, panoramic mountain vistas, and small town street scenes of Western NC.

Born in Greenville, NC, Jeff grew up observing his father paint rural scenes of eastern and coastal North Carolina. He has taken the artistic impressions he learned early on and applied them to his colorful landscapes, seascapes, and cityscapes.

"I strive to capture the scene in bold, expressive colors that represent the different views of North Carolina as I see it and particularly enjoy the play of light against the



**Downtown Charlotte Street, oil painting  
by Jeff Pittman**

downtown buildings, and the ever changing color in the skies and mountain ridges that surround us here. My goals is not to present my art as realistic, but rather to cast a unique light on my subject as I commit it to canvas to share with others."



**Red Barn Cane Creek,  
oil painting by Jeff Pittman**

**Jeff Pittman  
140-D Roberts Street Studios  
www.jeffpittman.com  
(828) 242-8014**

15

MAGNETIC THEATRE'S LATEST OUTRAGEOUS WORLD PREMIERE

## The Witches' Quorum

11

**T**he Magnetic Theatre, Asheville's newest professional stage company, and the only theatre in the Southeast dedicated exclusively to new works, continues its series of world premieres with an explosive new play, *The Witches' Quorum*, by David Eshelman. Eshelman calls his play "a quasi-historical spectacle, an abuse of great literature, an aspiring political tract, a comedy that ought not to be."

Set in 1617 Jamestown, on the eve of Pocahontas's fictitious North American tour, *The Witches' Quorum* follows the struggles of Mistress Hibbins (the witch-lady from *The Scarlet Letter*) and Cassy (the slave-woman from *Uncle Tom's Cabin*) as they attempt to flee their oppressive surroundings and arrive in the mythical land of Croatoan, where they believe they will find freedom for all witches.

The play's director, and The Magnetic Theatre's artistic director, Steven Samuels, cautions that *The Witches' Quorum* is not

BY CHALL GRAY



**Stephanie and Tracey Johnston-Crum in  
*The Witches' Quorum*.**

for the easily offended or the faint of heart. "This play is beautifully written, utterly accessible in spite of its literary roots, incredibly inventive, and wonderfully funny," he declares. "It traffics in adult language, overt

Continued on next page



# river arts district studio stroll

## Bizarre Bazaar

*An International Gallery Space featuring Sandee Shaffer Johnson*

After 35 years of living on four continents, Sandee Shaffer Johnson recently chose Asheville as home. This restless gypsy spirit and prolific artist, photographer and journalist has traveled or worked in 83 countries.

Her artwork has been shown in over 200 group, corporate or solo exhibitions, including Paris, Moscow, Rome, Berlin, Geneva, Shanghai, Seoul, Tokyo, NYC, Amsterdam, Brussels, Tel Aviv, Budapest, London and Stockholm.

Surprises await you at every nook and niche upstairs at Space 320, North River-



*Wallflowers*, photographic mixed medium, 20 x 16 by Sandee Shaffer Johnson



*Bowl of Life*, acrylic mixed medium, 30 x 20 by Sandee Shaffer Johnson

view Station. Her sprawling "Bizarre Bazaar" is piled high with curiosities, ephemera and artifacts from around the world along with an inexhaustible inventory of artwork.

Sandee's versatile work ranges from acrylics, collage, papermaking and encaustic to watercolor, oils, printmaking, assemblages, pen & ink, and photography. Visit her website at [www.sandee-art.eu](http://www.sandee-art.eu) and don't miss exploring this captivating space!

**The Bizarre Bazaar - TriArts Global Studio**  
Riverview Station North, Studio 320  
191 Lyman Street, Asheville, NC  
(828) 989-3359  
[artwoman6@gmail.com](mailto:artwoman6@gmail.com)

24

## Janton Art Studio

Stephen R. Janton grew up in Wilmington Delaware, where he was exposed to the Brandywine School and the artists Pyle, the entire Wyeth family, and his friend and guide George Weymouth.

Portraiture and the human form have always been Janton's main interest and he has developed a good sense of form during his many years studying and working as a physical therapist. His works in still life and landscapes tend to be more experimental with a sense of realism.

"I attempt painting what is real to me... what I see. In doing a portrait, I enjoy finding the composition that best describes the individual's personality and I include the person being painted in that process which makes for a more successful outcome."

"I frequently utilize the technique of a single light source in my portraits as it helps create greater depth. I rely primarily on the techniques of traditional oil painting but have tested my

deepest level of patience by painting in egg tempera and appreciate the quality of skin tones created by the unique process."

"Artwork should stand on its own merits — or fail on its own shortcomings if it does not succeed in registering favorably upon the viewer's sensibilities. Quality is the central issue, as it must be where art is concerned. I am doing my best and enjoying the process in my attempts at creating quality in my artwork."

**Janton Art Studio**  
Riverview Station, 191 Lyman St.,  
Studio #211, Asheville, NC 28801  
[www.jantonart.com](http://www.jantonart.com)

25

'Witches' Quorum' continued from page 22

sexual situations, lesbianism, cross-dressing, skewed views of religion, murder, and a song in French. In other words, it's intended for mature audiences only, and those audiences should anticipate a rollicking good time. Late shows of *The Witches' Quorum* should be especially engaging."

The show features some of the best acting talents in Western North Carolina. Stephanie and Tracey Johnston-Crum, both lauded for their performances in the hit

*When Jekyll Met Hyde* earlier this year, star as Cassy and Mistress Hibbins, respectively. The cast is rounded out by Kathryn Temple, who earned rave reviews for her portrayal of the title role of



*Ruth*; Lucia Del Vecchio, most recently seen in the underground sensation *Rock Saber*; Sara Fields, familiar from *Divalicious* and *Noises Off!*; and Scott Fisher, who plays the witch-burning Reverend Mr. Camden, who strives ruthlessly to block Cassy & Mistress Hibbins' escape to Croatoan.

The Witches' Quorum further establishes The Magnetic Theatre, in its home base at The Magnetic Field, as one of America's most inventive and audacious theatrical troupes, and a groundbreaking leader in the development and production of the nation's new plays.



The Witches' Quorum opens June 4, after preview performances June 2-3. Tickets \$12/14, previews \$8. For tickets or reservations, please visit [www.themagneticfield.com](http://www.themagneticfield.com), call (828) 668-2154, or stop by The Magnetic Field, 372 Depot St. in Asheville's River Arts District.

# JEFF PITTMAN

140-D Roberts Street Studios

(828) 242-8014

[www.jeffpittman.com](http://www.jeffpittman.com)

River Arts District