

Inside Arts - Art Center of Estes presents 'Time in a Bottle' show

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Jade Windell and Diana Wade with their pieces for the "Time in a Bottle" show. (*Barb Boyer Buck / For the Trail-Gazette*)

"I realized several years ago that my 'art heart' was truly here in Estes Park with the Art Center, and I've since focused my attention on doing everything I can to help carry out our mission in the community."

Diana Wade, elected to a three-year term as the Art Center of Estes Park's board president in 2016, is helping to install the current show this week at the nonprofit organization's gallery in Upper Stanley Village. She is a featured artist in the show, "Time in a Bottle," which also displays work from guest artist Jade Windell a stone sculptor from Loveland. The show opens on Friday, Aug. 4, with a public reception from 5-7 p.m., sponsored by member artist and board member Bonnie Bowne. The show runs through Sept. 9 and is available for viewing from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.



Volunteers help set up artwork for the "Time in a Bottle" show. (*Barb Boyer Buck / For the Trail-Gazette*)

The Art Center is celebrating 30 years of service to the Estes Park community in 2017, with the mission to provide a facility to support the work of local and regional artists and to promote exhibition, education, and excellence in the visual arts. The gallery space — located just across the parking lot from Safeway in Estes Park — hosts monthly exhibitions of member artists (and occasional guest artists) and art classes for people of all ages. The gallery is staffed by volunteers — member artists and other volunteers who man the desk and conduct sales of fine art, the proceeds of which benefit the artist and "contribute to the Art Center's education and community outreach," said Vickie Mastron, gallery manager for the nonprofit.

Mastron has served in that position since 2010 and has been a participating artist since 2004. She's been honored with a featured show 13 times since becoming a member.

The bustle in the organization's gallery this week, as the new show is installed, speaks to the strong support the Art Center elicits from the community and participating artists. Along with the show's featured artists, other member artists and board members were present to help hang the pieces in time for Friday's opening. Volunteers are attracted to the organization because of its track record of supporting local and regional artists and hosting exception exhibitions year-round.



"Time in a Bottle" featured work by Wade. (*Barb Boyer Buck / For the Trail-Gazette*)

The organization was first formed in 1987 by participating member artist Chris Swtizer and 21 local artists, said Mastron. At the time, "local galleries were not very interested in representing local artists," she said, "and so the Art Center came to be."

During the past three decades, the space, which is still in its original location, expanded to create a western wing in the gallery, improve the main exhibition space, added an artist workspace with art storage, and a kitchen area in the classroom.



Mastron with her art work. (*Barb Boyer Buck / For the Trail-Gazette*)

"The classroom and art education have always been an integral part of the Art Center's mission," Mastron said. "The Art Center offers a variety of adult and intergenerational art classes with talented and renowned artist instructors. Intergenerational classes were designed to accommodate people of all ages (such as a grandma and grandchild, or parent and child) in the same class for a shared art experience at an affordable price. The Art Center also offers a number free presentations each year by Art and Architectural Historian, Architectural Designer and Principal, and traveler in search of beauty and wonder, Chuck Benson. Chuck has been presenting engaging and informative evening lectures at the Art Center for more than 20 years!

"Another development from our education mission is the Mentor Show," Mastron continued. "This annual show in February features the art of developing artists/students who were mentored by Art Center artist members. In this exhibition, the mentored students' work is hung in the featured artist area of the gallery alongside the artists' work who mentored them. This exhibition has shown to be one of our most popular shows at the Art Center."

The Art Center holds two major fundraisers per year — the Art Market in Bond Park is an arts and crafts fair held every Memorial Day weekend and the nationally-juried "Lines Into Shapes" show has been exhibited in late autumn for 20 years.

Currently the Art Center has 41 artist members (memberships are juried and start at \$30/year), about half live in the Estes Valley; the other half live along Colorado's Front Range. Mastron and Kristi Elyce, the project coordinator, are the only paid Art Center staff.

Artist, staff and board members bring to the organization a plethora of experience and education in the arts — and all are quite willing to contribute their expertise in a variety of ways to continue this nonprofit's viability.

Mastron is originally from the Los Angeles area and moved to Estes Park from Boulder in April of 1991. She has a BA in ceramics from California State University at Fullerton and a master's of fine art degree earned at the University of Southern California in LA. She works in a variety of media: ceramics, glass, metal and others.

"Fiber has been my more recent exploration with felting," she said.

She was in her first juried show at the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery in 1977. Her work is displayed in the permanent collection at the Art Center, as are pieces from other member artists.

As the featured artist in the upcoming show, Wade has a variety of work included in "Time in a Bottle," which reflect her evolution as an artist with both paintings and collage pieces. She didn't take up painting until after retiring from her career as a registered nurse in medical administration positions. She moved from Galveston Island, Texas, to Loveland 16 years ago and began studying art in 2003.

Her work has been recognized in numerous national, international and regional competitions, and she has won awards in watercolor, pastel and mixed media/collage. She is a signature member of the Pastel Society of Colorado and member of the Colorado Watercolor Society. Elected to her second three-year term on the Board of Directors of the Art Center of Estes Park, she is currently serving as Board president for the third year and has chaired the Education Committee for five years. She is also a member of the Longmont Artists' Guild and Fine Art America.

She invited fellow Loveland artist Windell to participate in the show as a guest. He is a Colorado native who spent two summers of study at the Marble Institute of Colorado and has been on staff at that organization since 2013.

The current exhibition represents "a time stamp that captures an emotional space in life," he said. "The myriad of sculpted bottle shapes, sizes and colors reflect life's bountiful variations."

For more information about the Art Center of Estes Park and how to become a member, visit www.artcenterofestes.com or call 970-586-5882 during gallery hours.