



R-S photos by Brad Garrison

Barbara Enochian discusses the subtle aspects of her work with fellow artists at a recent art salon.

Art for Artists: Salon is gathering for the creative

North state artists of various disciplines have been getting together at a monthly salon to exchange ideas and inspire one another.

By John Crowe
R-S staff reporter

It may not be the Left Bank, but Jeanne Szody's Bella Vista home has become the gathering place for several north state artists.

Writers, painters and photographers get together the first Sunday of each month to talk about their work and exchange ideas.

Calling themselves an art salon, participants say they find the feedback from one another instructive and inspiring.

"It's a way for artists to learn from each other and to feed off each other," said Redding artist Geri Acosta.

Earlier this month, the group had a lively discussion about several paintings, listened to some poetry and had a good laugh over some humorous writings. There was even some music.

The salon began by chance when writer Carol Davydova, who had recently moved to Redding from Marin County, was shopping at a local dress shop where she encountered Usana Weaver, an artist. In the course of a conversation, Weaver asked Davydova what she missed most about the Bay area. Davydova's answer: her art salon.

It struck a chord with Weaver and the two began calling other artists, including Szody, Barbara Enochian and Tammy Nichols. The first salon convened in October.



Carol Davydova, right, reads some writing for artists like Deannie Meyer, left.

ing artists was that they felt a dearth of other people who were interested" in the arts, said Davydova.

The salon "is our way of dealing with where we live. We need a little outlet. We have our art life and our other life. We need stimulation and encouragement," as artists, added Enochian. She said that among her fellow artists, she can talk about her art in a different way than with non-artist friends.

"I felt like north state artists felt a little isolated. We can talk about techniques we use. It's water for my thirsty soul," said Szody, a writer, artist in pen-and-ink and an art collector.

Discussions at the salon are open-ended.

"We don't have any boundaries (in the discussions). It's always

an open forum," Davydova said, adding that the only limitation is that the participants be "working artists."

This month's gathering included several painters and writers.

For Acosta, who does impressionistic oil painting, the salon is "long overdue."

She added she believes the enthusiasm and inspiration generated at the salon gatherings will translate into more art in the community.

"When you have creative people, we can have shows," she said, adding that promoting art has been a topic of discussion at past salon gatherings.

For painter David Luzier of Shasta Lake, who made his first salon appearance this month, it was a Sunday afternoon well spent.

"It inspires me to keep going. They're are some very good painters here. We want to get some depth into what we paint.

It's a good feeling. When you do something by yourself, you don't get any insight," he said.

Painter Lynne Brooks said the salon offers a way "to share common interests and it's nice to see what others are doing."

Enochian led off the salon on this particular Sunday, showing a painting of the jumble of motel and other business signs along the "Miracle Mile" stretch of North Market Street in Redding.

She said the exaggerated proximity of the various signs was intended to produce a "cacophonous" effect.

Acosta brought an impressionistic painting of a section of Lake Tahoe shoreline, among others.

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artist Jeanne Szody

Noting a huge tree and small figures, she said she was trying to convey the "immensity of nature."

"I like to paint what I feel, not what I see," she said.

A discussion followed of the degree to which Acosta shares styles and techniques with another Redding artist, Susan Greaves.

Enochian said she had been concerned "that you were getting too much the same."

Acosta readily conceded that she admires Greaves' work, but said the two have complemented each other.

"I think Susan (Greaves) is helping me to mature, but I'm bringing about the child in her," she said.

Davydova offered that "being like someone else is part of the process you have to go through." And so it went through the afternoon.

Davydova read some sensual poetry. Jenai Greene showed her freerform "doodlings" and played a tape of some rather ethereal music she's composed. Deannie Meyer talked about painting with marble dust.