

“Get Away” Comes to Main Street Gallery

Feeling cooped up about now? Dreaming of getting away to someplace different? Main Street Gallery’s November/December exhibit, “Get Away” featuring Laurie Flannery may be just the antidote to banish the drab and the hum drum. Laurie, a multi-talented artist and MSG’s guest artist, has created a suite of oil paintings of sun, sand and sky which include figures dressed for vacation or the beach. These are small works with a big impact and are aimed to conjure up feelings of summer warmth and seaside vacations. The Baltimore artist is also showing her fun and fanciful jewelry and several of her thought provoking photographs.

“Recently I became focused on painting, and became a studio painter” Laurie says. “As a self-taught artist it is fun and challenging to discover the world of interpreting an image, mixing colors and applying paint” she says. “At first I was reticent about the fact that I did not go to art school, but in a way I think it has been a benefit to me, as I have been forced to make my own way without any of the dogma that is taught in higher education. It has encouraged me to adopt a way of thinking that is: If I want to do it, it can be done.”

While Laurie may be new to painting she is not new to the world of art. The prolific artist has been making unique jewelry creations for decades, learning her craft in continuing education programs at the Maryland Institute College of Art and Towson University. Her very first exhibit was at the prestigious American Craft Council Show in Baltimore.

Speaking about her jewelry-making process, Laurie says she finds “found” materials such as shell, stone and bone to be as worthy of her creations as pearls and semi-precious stones. “I take interest in the special meaning of all materials, which can be worn for protection, power, or just for the simple beauty of them.” she says. “I especially love the meditative act of beach combing and have incorporated some of my shells and finds into my recent jewelry creations.”

Laurie’s fascination with jewelry goes back to her childhood. “I have always loved jewelry and as a child I was scolded for taking the fake gems out of my mother’s costume jewelry. I just loved holding the sparkly glass in my hands.” While making jewelry has remained a constant presence in Laurie’s life as an artist, she is also a photographer who captures unique, eye-catching images and develops them in the darkroom. Again, The Maryland Institute College of Art

was instrumental in helping her hone her skills and in 2008 she was a semi-finalist in the lauded Janet and Walter Sondheim Competition.

“I love the act of creating and find myself floundering in the world without it“, Laurie says. She quotes the artist, Louise Bourgeois, “Art is a guarantee to sanity.”

“Get Away” featuring Laurie Flannery will also showcase the paintings, drawings, sculpture, jewelry, ceramics, photographs, textiles and mixed media creations of the MSG’s thirteen member artists. The exhibit will open on Friday, October 30 and extend through Saturday, January 2nd. Current hours of operation are Fridays and Saturdays from noon to 8 pm or by appointment at 410-330-4659. Online shopping is also available at the gallery’s new website: mainstgallery.net. On Thanksgiving weekend there will be additional shopping hours as the gallery will be open from 11-5 on Wednesday and 11-5 on Sunday as well. Special **Thanksgiving weekend events** will include the gallery’s participation in **Shop Small Saturday, Artist’s Sunday** (which the gallery will celebrate with yummy treats for visitors) and **Cyber Monday** when visitors to the website can learn how easy it is to shop for art online. In addition to these events there will be two artist receptions on Second Saturdays, November 14 and December 12 at the gallery from 5-8 pm. Check the gallery’s website (mainstgallery.net) and FB page (facebook.com/MainStGallery) for updates on exciting shopping events in December too. The gallery will be closed on Christmas and New Year’s Day.

Main Street Gallery is located at 518 Poplar Street, directly opposite Jimmie and Sook’s Restaurant. The gallery is the only member owned and operated Artist Cooperative in Cambridge and is currently looking at the work of prospective members. For membership information call them or visit their website. You can also like them on Facebook.

Main Street Gallery is taking all sanitary precautions to ensure the safety of its visitors and is complying with the governor’s order to wear masks and require all visitors to do the same.