


To do: Fountain Street art open house April 8-10

By **Chris Bergeron, DAILY NEWS STAFF**

GHS

Posted Apr 03, 2011 @ 10:00 AM

 Lynne Damianos and 2 others recommend this. [Undo](#)



NO DATA — Like many thriving communities, the artists of Fountain Street studios celebrate the differences that hold them together.

Lynne Damianos photographs skyscrapers and octopus tentacles as if seeing them for the first time.

With a bust of Bach and his grandfather's coronet on a shelf, Jeff Knapp spends hours practicing his classical guitar repertoire from Beethoven and Francis Poulenc to John Williams.

Margie Sisitsky throws wet clay on her cellar floor which she shapes and then fires into sensually textured pottery.

A photographer, a classical guitarist and a painter and potter, they are among 50 diverse artists working in the five-story Bancroft Building who will be inviting the public into their studios for three days next weekend during the 15th Fountain Street Open Studios.

Running April 8, 9 and 10, Open Studios 2011 will showcase a wide spectrum of art forms including oil paintings, acrylics, watercolors, prints, jewelry, illustrations, photography, sculpture, classical music and furniture restoration.

The studios will be open 5:30 to 9 p.m. on Friday, April 8 and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, April 9 and 10.

Visitors looking for something completely different should visit Bob Collini's third-floor studio.

Full of "found objects" that might be anything from shoe lasts, old springs or thistles, it resembles a combination of Pee Wee Herman's Playhouse and one of Joseph Cornell's whimsical "Shadow Boxes."

The retired computer negotiator fashions objects that defy convenient definition. Some might label them "mixed media" but you might as well call them totems or magical fetishes.

Collini titled a sculpted head with wire springs cascading from its scalp "Meditation doesn't do anything for me." He's created a series of "root people" from inverted pepper plants with root balls for heads and long, spindly bodies.

"I hope my art makes people smile," he said, "or scratch their heads."

One of the key organizers, Damianos said Open Studios 2011 will be special for artists and visitors for several reasons.

"Since celebrating the Bancroft Building's 100th anniversary last year, we have a heightened sense of community. Our numbers are growing as more artists hear about us," said the Framingham resident and past president of the informal organization running the open house and related events.

For the first time, Open Studios will be held after two resident artists, Cindy Clinton and Marie Craig, opened Fountain Street Fine Art, a 2,200-square-foot first-floor gallery that showcases work by local and regional artists.

Clinton, a painter who now lives in Boylston, was among the founding artists who first established studios in 1996 in the building owned by Richard Goldman.

Throughout April, Fountain Street Fine Art will be hosting "10 X 10," a group show by gallery members and building artists who will show art works in different media on 10-by-10-inch birch panels.

And during April, the Framingham Library will be hosting an exhibit of paintings and photos by about 15 Fountain Street artists.

Damianos, who professionally photographs architecture, products and people, will be showing in her studio 20 new color images from an ongoing series she calls NatureScapes, which she described as "extreme details of natural subjects, like leaves, flowers and water that become abstract."

In a gorgeous photo titled "Homeward Bound," droplets of water seem to be following the delicate veins of a leaf converging toward its center.

"Sometimes we don't pay attention to wonders right before our eyes," she said. "I want to force people to look at something they might see every day and find it's interesting."

Damianos said when fully occupied, the Fountain Street Studios may be the largest art venue "under one roof" west of Boston. "Right now the building is full. In some cases, they've subdivided some studios," she said. "So we're growing. Some of us would like to see it become more of a destination."

For several artists, their studios provide a private sanctuary to create, share ideas and cultivate ties to a supportive community of kindred spirits.

Since moving into Fountain Street three years ago, Roy Perkinson said he's been so productive he exhibited new paintings in 12 venues or exhibits.

"It's exhilarating. I absolutely feel like I've bumped things up a quantum level," said the Wellesley resident who recently retired as head of the paper conservation department at the Museum of Fine Arts. "I'm there almost every day."

Knapp came to Fountain Street in the late 1990s and has often been the only musician in the building where several small businesses still operate.

A Framingham native trained in composition and classical music at the Berklee College of Music, he performs solo at private, corporate and gallery events.

Knapp's musical tastes range from Mexican and Venezuelan composers, like Augustin Barrios and Antonio Lauro, respectively, to jazz giants like John Coltrane and Ornette Coleman. He said, "For me, music is a meditation."

Knapp said his third floor studio provides "a great environment" to rehearse. "The acoustics are better than my living room where I used to practice," he said. "The arts community has kind of grown up around me."

Before moving into a studio two years ago, Sisitsky painted in her garage which became a problem when she needed it for parking in the winter.

An art teacher at the Woodrow Wilson Elementary School, she uses her fourth-floor studio to paint large bold acrylics and plan her pottery which she throws in Framingham and fires in Somerville.

"I really like being part of the arts community at Fountain Street," said Sisitsky. "There's a lot of creative energy in this building."

THE ESSENTIALS:

WHAT: 15th Fountain Street Open Studio Weekend

WHEN: April 8-10

WHERE: Bancroft Building, 59 Fountain St., Framingham

HOURS: April 8, 5:30-9 p.m.; April 9 and 10, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

ADMISSION: Free

INFO: www.fountainstreetstudios.com; www.fountainstreetfineart.com