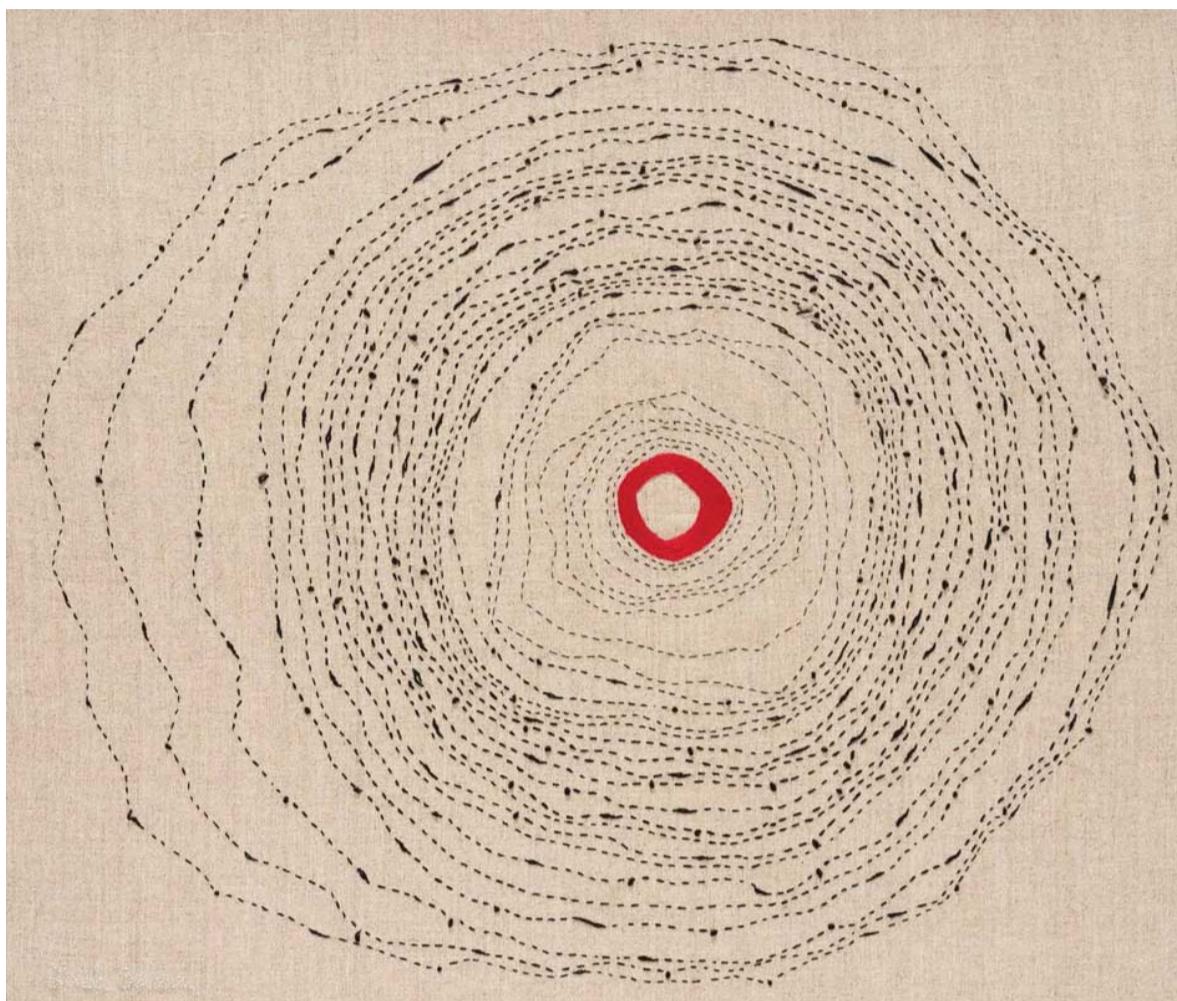


SCA's Bay Area Arts & Crafts Exhibition

By Isabella Cook | Feb 13, 2024



FALL 'Vertigo' is a stitching on linen by Linda Belden—perhaps a reference to Hitchcock?
Photo courtesy of Linda Belden

Arts and crafts are terms as interwoven as the colorful threads that come together and create great and beautiful tapestries, rugs, textiles and outfits.

Much like these lovely pieces are intrinsically linked, there is also almost no way to separate the small, blurry thread defining the line between fine artwork and fine craftsmanship.

Luckily, Marin's own Sausalito Center For The Arts understands this connection and has curated an exhibition to help celebrate the collaborative splendor of both categories with its upcoming Bay Area Arts & Crafts Exhibition. This exhibition explores the cerebral quality of arts, the specificity and utility of craft, and the cultural, up-to-interpretation overlap.

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At the exhibition, 55 creatives from across the Bay Area will show off their talent in not only fine arts, but also fine crafts and the art forms that fall into a more liminal, undefined space between the two.

The SCA's Bay Area Arts & Crafts Exhibition runs from Feb. 15 through March 15 and is open to all who wish to come out and appreciate this specially curated combination of locally produced arts and craftswork. These can be seen in categories such as paintings, photography, fiberwork, metalwork, textiles, jewelry, woodwork, glasswork, ceramics and more.

"The catalyst behind this exhibition is to explore the line between arts and crafts, which has really blurred," explained the SCA's executive director, Shiva Pakdel.

"Fine craft is no longer required to be functional, and more than ever we are seeing takes on traditional crafts like fabric art and weaving and quilting, but done in a way that is not necessarily anything other than its visual artistic value."

The line that separates the definitions of arts and crafts grows blurrier the more deeply the topic is discussed. While historical context once demanded a certain degree of usefulness or utility from categorically "craft" items, now there is far more debate and discourse surrounding the topic.

"Historically, it was really easy to separate these concepts once, like with the Persian

rugs I have which were made with a purpose in mind and were used but are still art," said Pakdel. "The lines are blurred, and it is subjective. So, when you look at some of these pieces, you can really ask yourself if it is an art, craft or both."

If an item is handcrafted with the intention of it being art, then regardless of the medium in which it is made, the intent behind the piece should be enough to categorize it as an art form rather than a craft. Or, for those who prefer the term craft, the "fine crafts" category may feel more comfortable. Ultimately, it is up to the individual artist, craftsperson, and audience interaction and reaction to determine how a piece is perceived and portrayed.

Either way, and labels aside, one thing is certain—the Bay Area is full of astoundingly talented individuals whose minds and hands are busy creating stunning, wholly unique items, visuals and experiences for those who care to come out and appreciate their hard work.

"This show has glass, ceramic, textile and woodwork—Sausalito actually has a lot of woodworkers, so they're bringing their benches and chairs and so on," said Pakdel. "Then there are people who work with fibers, textiles, papers...[we're] going to have mannequins there, with dresses on the mannequins from one artist and jewelry from another. Plus, a Persian artist I included in the last show...started working in the traditional mirrorwork of Iran, with these tiles and cut mirrors placed in front of the tiles to amplify the colors..."

The Bay Area artists whose fine arts and fine crafts are set to show at the SCA's exhibition this coming month are Abel Manalo, Alex Friedman, Alexander Verner, Ann Brooks, Barbara Sebastian, Bettina Schneider, Brett Crawford, Brian Madden, Bruce Powell, Catherine Merrill, Chandana Srinath, Deborah Corsini, Duncan Oja, Emily Dvorin, Erin Hupp, Eva Mitala, Gail Andersen, Jan Blythe, Jane Grimm, Joal Bennett, Joan Pinto, Jon Oakes, Judy Rosenfield, Julie Fenton Young, Julie Garner, Juline Beier, Kristine L. Barrett, Linda Belden and Linda Matson.

Also showing their fine arts and fine crafts at the exhibition are Lola Herrera, Lynne Meade, Marc Gounard, Mark Schatz, Martha Paulos, Mary Albert, Melissa Woodburn, Michael Childs, Mohammad Ranjbar Sadeghi, Nancy Luna Walker, Nasib Elahimehr, Patti Wessman, Rachel Cox, Reenie Charriere, Ryan Montgomery, Sandy DaRoza, Sara Pisheh, Scott Elkinton, Simo Neri, Sue Weil, Sunday Tirio, Teddie Hathaway, Thomas Hill, Tomas Ludlam, Youngmin Lee and Ziba Pashang.

"There's so much artwork to see Bay Area-wide; it's such a rich area, and everybody in this exhibition is a local Bay Area (person) from every corner," Pakdel explained. "The SCA may have started as the *Sausalito* Center for the Arts, but then we focused on expanding more into Marin...and when I started in June, I wondered why this incredible location wasn't a center of the arts for the whole Bay Area."

The opening reception for the SCA's Bay Area Arts & Crafts Exhibition runs from 5

to 7:30pm on Feb. 24 and includes live jazz by the trio MCM, with Charlie McCoy playing guitar, Steve Capper on the keyboard and Joe Mockus playing drums. This event also includes refreshments from a no-host bar.

After this arts and crafts exhibition runs, the SCA will host its next exhibition: Photo, Films & Paintings with Christopher Felver and Douglas Sandberg.

"This past year, we've had over 50 events, and not all of them were exhibitions," Pakdel said. "We had events for dance, book releases, music screenings—we've just been trying to get a bit of everything."

Given all the SCA does for the artistic (and craft-tastic) community of Sausalito, Marin and the Bay Area, there is no doubt in the organization's inherent value to the county and its creative citizens. But the SCA is facing an unprecedented rent hike, which will take their monthly rental expense from \$4,029 to \$11,095.

To continue to thrive past its first full year of existence as a nonprofit, the SCA asks that locals who wish to help or show support do so by reaching out to the city council before they meet on Feb. 20.

The Sausalito Center For The Arts is a 501c3 nonprofit organization located at 750 Bridgeway in Sausalito and is open from 11am to 5pm Wednesday through Sunday. To learn more about the center, its current fine arts and crafts exhibition, upcoming events and future exhibitions, visit the website at sausalitocenterforthearts.org.

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