

## Living Features

### Festival and Arts Trail Ahead

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#### Arts Center Killingworth's Annual Event Set for Oct. 8 to 9



*Autumn Storm*, pastel, by Jan Blencowe

The Arts Center Killingworth's (ACK) Autumn Open Art Studio Trail and Outdoor Arts Festival is back this year-and it's bigger than ever, thanks to the festival component's new location on the sizable Madison Green. This year, the two-day event is set for Saturday, Oct. 8 and Sunday, Oct. 9.

"The Green...was the catalyst for expanding the festival and because it is such a visible venue, a lot more artists and crafters are interested in joining," says ACK Artistic Director Barbara Nair. "We're hoping that if this goes well we can grow this over the next few years to over 100 artists and crafters...because the Green can handle that."

This year, about 70 artists and crafters will be exhibiting their wares on the Green.

Demonstrations and children's activities will punctuate the days, while food will give the hungry festival-goers the energy they need to hit the Open Studio Trail portion of the event: a self-guided driving tour of 12 open studios.

Says Nair, "Visitors on the Open Studio Trail enter the private, working spaces of artists and crafters winding through Madison, Clinton, Killingworth, Haddam, Chester, Westbrook, and Ivoryton. These picturesque towns and villages along the shoreline offer some of the area's most scenic fall foliage viewing and examples of classic New England architecture. Studio artists participating are landscape and realist painters Jan Blencowe and Diana Lyn Côté; modern and abstract painters Karen Green Recor, Jill Vaughn and Karen Bartone; *en plein air* watercolorist Theresa Zwart-Ludeman; illustrator and printmaker Sanna Stanley;

photographer and mixed media artist Debi Friedlander; award-winning potters and ceramicists Hayne Bayless and John Hull; wood artisan Tony DeLorenzo; sculptors and painters Gail Mally-Mack and Ashby Carlisle; jewelry designer and decorative glass artist Mary Anne DeLorenzo; and couture fashion designer Astrid Niemelaeinen.

One popular veteran of the Open Studio Trail, *The Hobbit* illustrator David T. Wenzel, has decided this year to set up shop at the festival instead. Wenzel hopes this will give him more opportunity to meet art appreciators at the event, throughout which he will be demonstrating his craft.

"Another couple of things that are different this year...are that a lot of the artists and crafters [who will be at the festival] are people coming into our area that the public hasn't seen before; they'll be new to them. That's a nice experience for the public and for the artists, too.

"We also have found several people that are in the festival that would be called, I guess, 'emerging artists'...I find it really exciting when we can encourage and support an emerging artist as well as a professional artist...The festival particularly seems to have a quality of openness and inclusiveness this year, and I love that. It really has brought in more artists from different areas, at different levels of their careers."

Also in keeping with the theme of inclusiveness, notes Nair, is the emphasis on family.

"Families are welcome! It's wonderful for children to go around to the various exhibitors and see what they do...Even just to look at the work is educating for the children's eyes...They also have their own activities-origami for families, which is relaxing; jewelry making for boys and girls;" and an interactive "Beautiful Bubbles" activity courtesy of the Children's Museum of Southeastern Connecticut.

With so much going on across two full days, it's no surprise Nair has the following advice: "Don't underestimate how much there is to do. Get an early start! I really think that is the key to having a wonderful weekend."

**The Details:** The Arts Center Killingworth (ACK) Autumn Open Art Studio Trail and Outdoor Arts Festival is based on the Madison Green on Saturday, Oct. 8 and Sunday, Oct. 9. Festival hours are Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 6 p.m. Studios are open from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Saturday and from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday.

The festival portion of the event is free; passes and maps for the Open Art Studio Trail are available on the Green. Weekend passes for the Open Art Studio Trail are \$10; free for children 12 and younger. Passes can be purchased in advance by calling ACK at 860-663-5593 or visiting [www.artscenterkillingworth.org](http://www.artscenterkillingworth.org). **Weekend travel packages** are available to visitors, as well, with local B&Bs and inns participating.