

PRESS RELEASE

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ClearWater Artist Studios produces 3rd Successful, Annual ‘Portrait Paint-Off.’

CONCORD -- On Saturday, February 18th, ClearWater Artist Studios held their 3rd Annual ‘Sun Drop Pound Cake Portrait Paint-Off.’ The signature event, unique to the Studios, drew roughly 150 visitors to watch 13 painters work live, completing portraits from a single model in under two hours. The festive atmosphere was punctuated by artist interviews, 5-minute speed drawings of audience members, & raffle prize drawings; and augmented by the plentiful Sun Drop Pound Cake on offer. Several guests went home with prizes, a new ClearWater T-shirt or a new artwork for their walls. Brazilian Samba music filled the space.

The artists, grouped around model Melissa Ritchie, worked feverishly to render her likeness, while onlookers murmured excitedly and took photos or video. The five Featured Painters, invited for their portraiture skills, didn’t disappoint, producing remarkably lifelike portraits for such a short working time.

“Great people, model and cake!! I had a wonderful time, even though the clock was ticking!!” Said artist Robin Wellner, one of the five ‘Featured Painters,’ whose works are on exhibit in the ClearWater Gallery through March 31. Another artist, local painter Kevin Harris, said, "What a great space... I have wanted to paint with ClearWater's resident artists for some time now and I was not disappointed... I can't wait to do it again." In their studio, the Southern Piedmont Woodturners entertained guests with demonstrations on their lathe and a display of cigar-box guitars. Local reporter, Michael Knox served as Emcee throughout the event.

ClearWater Artist Studios would like to thank the many businesses and individuals who helped make this event possible: The Concord Youth Council and other volunteers during the event; The Sweet Life bakery, 2 Gals Kitchen and Cheerwine Company for the food and drink; and our generous gift-basket prize donors: Cougar Run Winery, Southern Grace Distilleries and S&D Coffee & Tea. Thanks go also to the ClearWater resident artists, who kept their studios open during the event. Most especially, the painters, who participated for the fun, camaraderie and challenge of it, and allowed an audience in ‘behind the curtain’ to see their process.

Next on ClearWater’s public calendar is the Opening Reception for ‘*Impulse*,’ the annual Student Art Exhibit of Rowan-Cabarrus Community College’s Fine Arts & Design Department, on Friday, April 7, 6-8pm. This will be the fourth year of this partnership. More events are in the works. If you’d like to be involved, the ClearWater Artists’ Coalition, an organization of the resident artists, offers Affiliate Memberships to anyone interested in getting involved in planning and events, for a \$25 annual dues fee.

Spaces at ClearWater such as the Gallery, and outdoor green, Market etc. are available to rent for private events. Contact the Manager, Sarah Gay, to inquire.

For more information, see www.clearwaterartists.com; call ClearWater Artist Studios at 704-784-9535 or send an email to: clearwatermgr@gmail.com. The ClearWater Artist Studios Facebook page is continually updated with photos.