

EXHIBIT PLACITAS

'AROUND THE BEND'

Artist Joan Fenicle showcases mixed-media pieces inspired by Southwest wanderings

BY ELIZABETH SECOR
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Joan Fenicle is a wanderer and an artist.

"I consider myself a multimedia artist who enjoys the process, the mess of the acrylics and construction materials that go into my mixed-media pieces," Fenicle said, "(and) getting oil paint on my hands and clothes, which I do quite well."

Much of her art starts as photographs she takes during various wanderings through the world, primarily in the Southwest.

"Something speaks to me, and you'll see me wheel off the road and get out my camera and try to capture that thought," she said.

Fenicle will show at Wild Hearts Gallery with "In the Spirit of Haiku," showcasing pieces from some of her favorite places, including Nambé Pueblo, the San Juan Mountains, Navajo National Monument and more. She said she is drawn to the South-

'IN THE SPIRIT OF HAIKU'

WHEN: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday; opens Wednesday, June 3, through June 28

WHERE: Wild Hearts Gallery, 221-B New Mexico Highway 165, Placitas

HOW MUCH: Free, wildheartsgallery.com

west and the mountains.

Fenicle feels her art and haiku are similar.

"(Haiku is) taking an emotion or an experience and putting it in words, and I feel like I'm doing that with my paint," Fenicle said.

While the pieces start as photographs, she said, they will often end up as a combination of thoughts.

"The designs begin in my mind, even though they're inspired by images I've collected during my wanderings," Fenicle said.

"Sometimes a piece takes on a life of its own once you start trying to put paint on canvas."

Fenicle said she takes



COURTESY OF WILD HEARTS GALLERY

'Head'n Home,' Joan Fenicle.

some liberties with her work. One piece began with a cloud formation emerging from Chaco Canyon. She added three sheep peeking over the horizon, taking inspiration from a hike in the Navajo National Monument, where she saw a herd of sheep and two boys riding over a ridge.

One of her largest pieces in the show is a diptych from a trip she and her friend took to a lake at Nambé Pueblo.

"It was one of those beautiful New Mexico fall days," Fenicle said. "The trees are in color, and it's calm enough that the cottonwoods are reflecting in the lake."

Fenicle grew up in

the Rocky Mountains of Colorado and moved to New Mexico in the 1970s. Growing up, she drew and painted, but it was when she moved to Placitas that she began to spend more time creating.

"I actually had a dedicated studio where I could leave my paints out and a wet canvas. And I've always been one that likes to take to the dirt roads, (as a) hiker and backpacker, so I found that I had literally hundreds of images I collected, slides, film ... and images just kind of tell you what life they want to take on," Fenicle said.

She became more invested in photography when her husband was battling

"Dirt roads seduce me, never met one I didn't like. Serendipity."

— Haiku by Joan Fenicle

cancer and she spent time away from her studio. She began sorting through her images, deciding which to print and mount.

"Making art is always a very settling, healing thing for me," Fenicle said.

As she has transitioned from film to digital photography, she said the biggest advantage is the convenience and not having to worry about running out of film rolls.

"You just can literally

snap away at your heart's content as you try to get the right light and the right view on a subject," Fenicle said. "It's just a wonderful tool, and the quality keeps improving and improving."

She said digital also frees her from restrictions of having to shoot at certain times of day. She is just capturing a reminder, Fenicle said.

"I'm gathering thoughts and stories and moving down the road and looking for, you know, what's around the bend," Fenicle said.

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