

Art at the heart of new Fountain Street Fine Art

By Chris Bergeron/DAILY NEWS STAFF GHS

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FRAMINGHAM — After working separately for years as a painter and photographer, Cheryl Clinton and Marie Craig have completed their first collaborative creative endeavor, Fountain Street Fine Art.

The just-opened 2,200-square-foot gallery provides a spacious showroom for area artists in the first floor of the Bancroft Building in the heart of Fountain Street Studios, perhaps the largest artists' community in Framingham and one of the most diverse and cohesive in MetroWest.

"We are really thrilled to be opened," said Clinton, a Framingham native who's been renting studio space in the building since October 1996. "It's been a fast-track operation."

For their inaugural exhibit, Clinton and Craig are showing an exciting selection of 117 diverse works by 68 artists including several with strong regional reputations and about 20 artists who work out of the Fountain Street Studios.

Juried by Katherine French, executive director of the Danforth Museum of Art, the exhibit --titled "unscripted" --includes oil, acrylic and watercolors, prints, woodcuts, sculptures and installations. Most works are for sale in the show which runs through Feb.

27.

Craig credited French, who examined about 220 works over five hours and then shared advice on the organization and layout of the exhibit. "If it's in the show, it's because Katherine French was impressed by its quality or felt it was interesting," said Craig of Natick. Displayed in the roomy gallery, the eclectic art of "unscripted" mixes gorgeous oil paintings by Roy Perkinson of Wellesley with

Framingham artist Elizabeth Magilligan's watercolor "Dancing Snow," which evokes the ephemeral natural beauty of a Japanese

print. Fountain Street artist Anne Sargent Walker's boldly exotic acrylic "Hummingbird in a Hot Landscape" provides a startling contrast to Acton artist Mimi Macksoud's delicate watercolor "Magnolia."

Several photographers submitted interesting work in varied styles. Jeff Adams of Holliston captured the slippery immediacy of trout fishing in "Catch and Release" while Alan Braeley of Millis

observed Harvard Square in a moment of near total stillness. Dennis Stein of Medfield photographed structures with architectural formality while Lynne Damianos of Framingham made the bristles of a squeegee mop as beautiful as sheaves of wheat. Joel Moskowitz of Sudbury turned throwaway library cards into genre-twisting art while Lexington artist Bill Cohn is showing a

menagerie of strange and spooky ceramic creatures like "The Sentinel," "Monogod" and "Xylem."

Sharing a February birthday and a belief local artists needed a place to show their work, Clinton and Craig began looking last spring for a location large enough to host simultaneous exhibits. Clinton recalled, "I approached Marie and said, 'I have a crazy idea. Would you be interested?'" When they learned Pastore Printing was vacating the space it had occupied for 22 years, they secured a long-term lease from

building owner Richard Goldman.

Now a Boylston resident, Clinton said opening the gallery fulfilled a promise and prediction she made on moving in to her third-floor studio 14 years ago. "I always felt artists needed a space to show their work," she said. They're holding a Grand Opening Reception on their mutual birthday, Saturday, Feb. 5, from 5 to 8 p.m. in the gallery at 50 Fountain St., Framingham.

different fees, solo and group exhibits and showing opportunities. Clinton described Fountain Street Fine Art as "a bit of a hybrid between a traditional gallery and a cooperative." For example, a Core Artist would pay an \$840 annual fee for an "ongoing presence" in the gallery, a solo show every other year, and 70/30 percent artist-to-gallery split for sales and other benefits.

Clinton and Craig said they expect to host a new exhibit every four to six weeks, showing work by artists throughout the area including Fountain Street. "We're looking to build something that's going to be a real asset to artists and the community and be here for a long time," said Clinton. *Fountain Street Fine Art is at 59 Fountain St., Framingham and can be reached at 508-879-4200,*

<http://birthingagallery.blogspot.com> or by e-mailing fountainstfineart@gmail.com.