

ART EXTRAVAGANZA

Celebration of Fine Art, Scottsdale's longest-running art show and working artists' studio, returns to the big white tents for its 34th year

Every year, big white tents pop up on Hayden Road just off Loop 101 in Scottsdale. For those wondering what lies within, it's the Celebration of Fine Art, an art extravaganza spanning 40,000 square feet, housing the working studios of revered and emerging artists from across the country.

The interactive, highly immersive experience invites art lovers to engage with the artists and see the process that goes into creating their work.

"We have 100 fine art artists from around the world, so there's something for everyone here, whether it's contemporary art, jewelry, Western art, sculpture, glass, wood or copper," says Susan Morrow Potje, show director. "We also have a beautiful sculpture garden set against the backdrop of the McDowell Mountains. It's a beautiful environment to sit and take in art and the natural beauty of the surrounding desert."

Every Friday at 4 p.m. throughout the 10 weeks, there will be an installment of the Art Discovery Series, which are hour-long, themed discussions with artists during which guests learn about their process and can ask questions, all while enjoying wine and light bites. The interactive aspect of the event is what keeps guests – and artists – returning year after year. Two of the artists showing this year have been with the show since the beginning.

"There's a real spirit of connection here as artists and art lovers share stories, learn from each other, or simply admire the creativity flowing through the tent," Potje says. "Many of the artists say the Celebration of Fine Art is part master class in art and a summer camp. They are inspired by and learn a tremendous amount from one another as they share processes, tools and resources."

Admission is sold in the form of an all-event pass, which is good for admittance the entire duration of the show. Because it is a working studio as well as an art show,

BY BECKY ANTIOCO



patrons can watch artists' works in progress and even find new pieces every week.

"It's truly a magical place that has to be experienced," says Potje, encouraging guests to give themselves more time than they would think to explore all the stalls. "From the spirit of connection to the creative energy flowing through the tents, you can't help but feel inspired and uplifted as you journey through."

More than 30,000 people are expected to visit the event over the 10-week run. Many come for the first time and return with family and friends to share the experience. There are longtime collectors who make attending the show an annual tradition and those who are just discovering the artists and their work. All of these elements combine to create the sense of connection and camaraderie that permeates the show.

IF YOU GO...

What: Celebration of Fine Art

When: Jan. 13-March 24, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. daily

Where: Hayden Road and the Loop 101, Scottsdale

Price: Adults, \$10; seniors and military, \$8

Information: www.celebrateart.com.