

**OUT &
ABOUT**



Larry Barel

**Barel joins
museum board**

Larry Barel has been named a board member of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. Mr. Barel is founder and principal of Pacific Capital Resources and a co-founder and executive chairman of Aqueos Corporation. He has been an investor, board member and adviser to public and private companies. Mr. Barel was also board chairman and lead investor at Software.com, a Santa Barbara startup. He spent 10 years as founder, broker and principal of Sun Pacific Properties before co-founding Wavefront Technologies in 1984, which won two Academy Awards for its computer animation. He is a graduate of Brigham Young University.

—Charlotte Boechler

OUR TOWN

**Quick Draw &
Arts Festival**

The 29th annual Quick Draw & Arts Festival, sponsored by Santa Ynez Valley Arts, will be held Aug. 14 and 15 at Mattei's Tavern, 2350 Railway Ave. in Los Olivos. Festivities begin with a reception 5 to 7 p.m. Aug. 14 on the private lawn at Mattei's. On Aug. 15, the Quick Draw will take place from 10:30 a.m. to noon, and during the Fine Artwalk from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., guests can bid in live and silent auctions. This year's Quick Draw features Vicki Andersen, Mike Brady, Camille Dellar, Jim Farnum, Kevin Gleason, Mark Greenaway, Gary Johnson, George Lockwood, Joe Milazzo, Donna Moser, Richard Myer, Karina Puente, Cathy Quiel, Luis Ramirez, Ray Sevilla, Laurel Sherrie, Debra Sievers, BJ Stapen, Arturo Tello, Jerry Vande Berg and Thomas Van Stein. For more information, call 886-0858 or visit www.santaynezvalleyarts.org.

—Marilyn McMahon

ON STAGE

**Mariachi festival at
SB Bowl**

The Santa Barbara Mariachi Festival will take place at 5:30 p.m. Saturday at the Santa Barbara Bowl, 1122 N. Milpas St. Performers are Ballet Folklórico de Los Angeles, Mariachi Garibaldi de Jaime Cuellar, Mariachi Divas de Cindy Shea, Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan, Alicia Villareal and Ana Barbara. Tickets cost \$50 to \$95. To purchase, stop by at the box office between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. weekdays; call 800-745-3000; or go to www.sbbowl.com. Proceeds benefit scholarships for Latinos. For more information, call Etelvina Menchaca at 962-9416 or email Alex Jauregui at ajauregui@righetti.us.

—Dave Mason



What

if?

Query leads Summerland artist to try new painting technique

HELENA DAY BREESE / NEWS-PRESS

John Grandfield's home studio is in the corner of one of the rooms in his home, which is located behind a picket fence in Summerland, where he has lived for 33 years. The self-taught artist sells his paintings at the Santa Barbara Arts and Crafts Show on Sundays along East Cabrillo Boulevard.



By **MARILYN MCMAHON**
NEWS-PRESS STAFF WRITER

Editor's note: In honor of the Santa Barbara Arts and Crafts Show celebrating 50 years, the News-Press is spotlighting some of the longtime exhibitors (25+ years!) throughout summer.

When a fellow artist brought John Grandfield a container of acrylic and suggested he try using it for his artwork, he told her nicely, "Thank you, but I'm an oil painter," and put it aside.

"Five months later, I was feeling guilty, and she was insistent, so I began fooling around with it and found the texture interesting. A different medium has led me down a different path," said Mr. Grandfield, who sells his textured paintings at the Santa Barbara Arts and Crafts Show on Sundays along East Cabrillo Boulevard. He has been exhibiting his artwork there since 1989.

During an interview in the shady garden of his quaint home in Summerland, the artist held one of his pieces, a framed graphic image of a single crow, and explained the process.

"I painted the crow on birch plywood and then I painted over it with the acrylic medium (and) combed it in swirls. I make my own tools to get the patterns I want," said Mr. Grandfield, 57. "For multiple color coats of acrylic wash, I have to let each one dry before applying the next one."

After mastering the technique, he asked himself, "What if I put clear acrylic on a photo?"

The result was "Summerland Beach at Sunrise," a small photo on a Masonite panel that has a heavy layer of acrylic textured with circles around the sun and ripples in the waves.

"Positive Vibrations," a scene of Santa Barbara from the top of East Camino Cielo, is another example of a painting that was created when Mr. Grandfield asked himself, "What if?"

"What if I didn't use acrylic and textured with oil? I combed through the oil for texture," he said.

While much of his work is still oil paintings of Santa Barbara landscapes, Mr. Grandfield has found that "playful acrylic texture wash is fun."

All of his paintings have recycled wood frames made by Mr. Grandfield, who was a finish carpenter before becoming an artist. After graduating from Santa Barbara High School in 1975, he worked for a construction

Please see **ART** on **A7**

Developing an eye for studio craft

D.H. has what appears to be a basket, produced in the 1990s in Australia. It's a great example of "studio craft art." Objects like this are typically innovative, ambiguous, true to ancient craft techniques. They resemble objects from both the ancient past and the future. Is D.H.'s basket ritualistic, ancient tribal art? Is it made of wicker (as most baskets are)? Cast metal? Bone? Leather? Is it ceramic? Is it wood? Actually, it's all of the above.

This ambiguity makes good studio craft art hard to identify and difficult to sell if you are not selling it from the original gallery. The art simply can't be pigeonholed. Such pieces are neither industrial design, nor architectural design, nor fine art design. When craft art is not done well, it loses a quality called "integrity." The artist may have taken a shortcut; something about the artwork seems to be

wrong. A good example of this might be tribal art that is mass-produced by non-natives.

D.H. said that the artists behind her basket are a married couple, Tanija and Graham Carr, with an international yet niche reputation, perhaps better known today than when D.H. purchased the piece in the '90s because of their 2014 show at Sculpture, Objects and Functional Art and Design (SOFA) in Chicago (a great town for studio craft). Their work is for sale in Chicago at Zimmer galleries, and a piece like D.H.'s might be priced between \$6,000 to \$8,000. Of course, few people would reorganize D.H.'s piece for that value out of context. My suggestion to D.H. is that she get in touch with Zimmer in Chicago to try to consign her piece, as

nowhere else will she achieve its true worth.

Gallerists who represent such craft artists do not want their artists' works to sell outside of the gallery because the artists' sales records can be easily skewed to the detriment by a rogue sale to an uninformed buyer. For instance, say Zimmer sells three pieces of the couple's work for \$8,000 each. Then another piece appears on Craigslist for \$50 because the owner has no idea how much it is worth at retail. The artists' portfolio of values achieved is therefore tarnished.

D.H., however, has excellent taste. We have talked about her life project, which is a catalogue raisonné of the artist F.S. Church: a chronicle of his letters vis-a-vis his paintings and illustrations.



**ASK THE
GOLD DIGGER**
Dr. Elizabeth Stewart



COURTESY PHOTO

The value of this vessel can be skewed in the wrong hands.

Church fascinates her because, back in the late 19th to early 20th century, Church was fascinated by D.H.'s grandmother and painted and drew her often. D.H. has traced her grandmother's beloved artist friend to a very wealthy local family who established a homestead ranch in the Central Coast hills back at the last turn of the century.

When someone has studied an

artist for more than 20 years, and has written books about the art, he or she develops an eye, as D.H. has. Exceptional shapes, unique materials, repetition of lines and signature colors intrigue. The benefits of being able to "see" may lead to idiosyncratic purchases like D.H.'s craft vessel. Her eye is leading her heart. The quality of "a good eye" is honed over a lifetime. When an aficionado has both the core ability to see and the learned ability to look, he or she becomes a connoisseur. That person has entered into a mutual contract with a beloved work of art. That contract is a willing, mutual state of creativity.

Dr. Elizabeth Stewart's column appears every week in the Salon & Style section. Email her your questions and high-resolution photos at ElizabethAppraisals@gmail.com or send to Ask the Gold Digger, c/o News-Press, P.O. Box 1359, Santa Barbara 93102-1359.