

Get Inspired:

Annual Tour of Private Gardens & Garden Gallery Art Sale

by Joanna Nesbit

The weather is warmer, trees are in leaf, and flowers are blooming. The season is looking up. Whether a gardener, an artist, or simply a person inspired by beauty, you won't want to miss the Whatcom Horticultural Society's Annual Tour of Private Gardens and Garden Gallery Art Sale on June 20 & 21, 11am-5pm. The Art Sale, back by popular demand for the second year, will showcase local artists' outdoor art at a separate garden location from the main garden tour.



Joyce Cheney's garden, designed by Susan Schwiesow.
Photo courtesy of Schwiesow & Drilias

This year's tour of six private gardens is primarily in the southern end of Bellingham, from an Asian-inspired garden near WWU to a "courtyard" garden on Blakely Court to several gardens along the north shore of Lake Whatcom. Participants change each year, but the tour always features a mix of gardens, ranging from modest do-it-yourself types to higher-end professionally designed gardens, as well as a variety of settings, such as woodland or lakeside, says Pam Terhorst, co-president of the Whatcom Horticultural Society.

Visitors will see a diversity of designs, textures, and plants. The courtyard garden, inspired by travels in Spain, Portugal, and Mexico, exemplifies how an outdoor area can be designed to extend the indoor living space. A garden at the base of Squalicum Mountain features a four-terraced rock garden and kitchen garden, bordered by a woodland area of old-growth trees and native shrubs. A lakeside garden features a pond and waterfall as the focal point, as well as a pleasing palette of shrub and perennial borders.

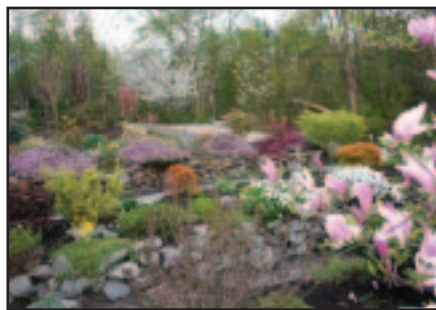
The art component was added to the garden tour last year as an experiment, and proved highly successful. Steve and Laurie Satushek, whose garden was on last year's tour and who hosted last year's Art Sale, will host the sale again this year.

"The artists loved being here, and visitors loved it—we got a great response," says Laurie.

The Art Sale, to be held outdoors in the Satushek garden, will showcase outdoor art from a variety of local artists, including hand-painted terracotta pots and welcome signs by Ben Mann, mosaics by Sandra Byron, hand-blown glass sculptures by Allison Hoagland, Susanne Averde's whimsical cement sculptures, and Steve Satushek's colorful outdoor photographs, treated to withstand weather, as well as his abstract paintings. For a complete list of artists, visit www.whatcomhortsociety.com. Prices run the gamut to accommodate all pocketbooks, ranging from work for as little as \$10 to pieces up in the thousands.

Of the art sale, Steve says it allows visitors to see "the whimsical nature of what's possible in the outdoors, things that are new and different."

"People will get inspired," Laurie says. "Even if they don't buy anything, they'll get great ideas to use art in their garden. We want people to open their thinking."



Antje Cote's garden. Photo by Antje Cote

The Satushek garden itself is sure to offer new ideas for incorporating art into the outdoors. The nearly 8-acre property on Marine Dr. perches on a bluff overlooking Bellingham Bay and the Nooksack River delta. Once a plain, monochromatic house without even a walkway to the door, the now-vibrant home is a



The garden of Judy and Mike Peterson.
Photo by Judy Peterson

stunning example of art blended into everyday living. You'll find plenty of whimsy here, including Steve's outdoor nature photographs, a butterfly chair, and cobalt bottle sculptures. Notice each wall of the house is a different color, each playing a role in creating separate sanctuaries. Don't miss the trail down to the beach, where you'll discover a bamboo oasis, Steve's Jungle Hut, and beach flotsam used in unexpected ways.

For the first time, to accommodate all interests, the tour will offer two entry-fee options, one for attending the art sale only and one for taking the whole tour. Tickets cost \$5 for the Garden Gallery Art Sale only or \$18 for the Tour of Private Gardens, which includes the art sale (\$15 members). Children 12 and under are free. Proceeds go to the Whatcom Horticultural Society, a non-profit organization.

Tickets are available at most Bellingham garden centers and nurseries, Whatcom Convention and Visitors Bureau, as well as Cloud Mountain Nurser in Everson, and Hi Hoe Nursery and Vander Giessen Nursery in Lynden. Tickets are also available at the gardens during the tour (tickets include driving directions). Please note dogs are not allowed at the gardens except for service dogs. For the complete list of gardens, artists, and ticket locations, visit www.whatcomhortsociety.org or call 738-6833.

Joanna Nesbit is a frequent contributor to *Entertainment News Northwest*. Her work has appeared in *FamilyFun*, *Wondertime*, and online. She also writes for Bellingham's parent website, www.neighborhood-kids.com, where she can be found blogging as Moxie Mom on the parent life.



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