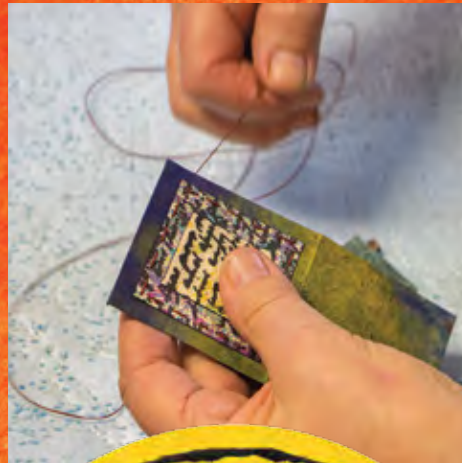


The DTC

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2017

CONNECTION



FINE CRAFT CREATIONS

Local art tour gives glimpses into studios

Abraham Pardee will bring his portable forge to stop 11, hosted at Creek Bend Pottery. He creates hand-forged metalworks.



A THREE-DAY OPEN-STUDIO CELEBRATION OF FINE CRAFT

BY LISA SAVAGE

Rob Harvey loves the feel of damp clay as he pinches it or rolls a clump into a coil for a pot. His creations take on an even more distinctive look as they're finished in a wood-fired kiln.

Claudia Lee's inspiration for some of her art comes from her grandmother's 1952 journal. Lee transfers the words to papers she uses for art projects.

Jack Loeb relies on his imagination and life experiences to create abstract paintings.

They are among more than 30 artists who will showcase their skills at 14 professional studios during a three-day tour, complete with demonstrations and an art marketplace. The 18th annual Off The Beaten Path Studio Tour is Oct. 27-29 in Smith and DeKalb counties.

Participants will meet artists such as Loeb, who traveled the world as an art teacher before settling in Smithville a few years ago. After marrying in 2011, he added a small workspace to his wife's house and opened Jack Loeb Painting Studio. He has enjoyed participating in the tour ever since. "It's certainly a good choice for selling paintings," he says. "And it gives a lot of people an opportunity to see your work."

INTERACTING WITH AN ARTIST

Harvey has participated in the event for several years, and he loves the interaction with the public. Most of the stops on the tour have guest artists in addition to the studio owners.

Harvey will have an operating kiln to give visitors a glimpse into the pottery-firing process, and a blacksmith will operate a portable forge. "It's a good way to get exposure for as many artists as possible while having fewer stops for the visitors," he says.

Several years ago, after his family's dairy-farming business started winding down, the Smithville artist learned pottery at the Appalachian Center for Craft.

Harvey, who has a degree in art history,

had never handled clay, but he liked the idea of creating a piece of art with his hands. "I did it pretty clumsily at first," he says.

He wanted to use a traditional method of firing the clay, so he built his own wood-fired kiln, brick by brick, at Creek Bend Pottery. "It's a lot more labor-intensive than turning on the electricity," he says.

The firing process takes between 18 and 20 hours. Four or five hours are needed for the fire to reach 700 degrees. Then, Harvey has help to keep the fire going as the kiln climbs to about 2,400 degrees. The burning wood creates its own glaze, and no two pieces are ever the same.

ART BECOMES PERSONAL

Lee's work at Liberty Paper is also unique. She creates her own paper from plant fibers, breaking them down to make pulp and forming it into sheets. Once the sheets are pressed and dried, Lee looks at the results with pride.

"Opening the drier is like opening a huge gift," she says. "The wet sheets have been transformed into papers with lovely surfaces, edges and colors. It's another magic moment." She uses her papers for writing, book-making and painting.

Lee was chosen in 2011 to create the 14 wall pieces for the Governor's Art Awards. She is a two-time recipient of a master craftsman's grant from the Tennessee Arts Commission. She is also a past president of Tennessee Craft, a state craft organization headquartered in Nashville. She is author of a book on paper-making and has contributed

articles to many books and magazines focused on her craft. She even teaches classes on papermaking.

But it's the connection she feels to her grandmother that sets apart some of her creations. Her grandmother was born in Palestine and traveled the world on an ocean liner and kept a day-by-day record of the journey.

Lee had the idea to copy the text from the journal and make transparencies to transfer the words to her papers, which are then used for necklaces and other small pieces.

She also has used the paper for large wall pieces and boxes, including some three-dimensional pieces, in a range of sizes.

Lee has worked with the Off the Beaten Path tour for many years and loves being part of the promotion of the arts and crafts in the area. "It's a unique way for the public to get a glimpse into what we do," she says. ☺



Claudia Lee, with Liberty Paper, will be at her own location at stop 7. She is a studio artist working with handmade paper.

615-536-5854

OFF THE BEATEN PATH TOUR STOPS

10 a.m.-5 p.m., Oct. 27-29

▶ STOP 1

From the Earth & Sea Originals
237 Gard Lane, Smithville
Pottery and wood furniture

▶ STOP 2

Kathryn Faille Designs
189 Sundrifter Lane, Auburntown
Fiber, jewelry, watercolor

▶ STOP 3

Jack Loeb Painting Studio
2653 Jacobs Pillar Road, Smithville
Painting

▶ STOP 4

Made by deMay
802 S. Mountain St., Smithville
Clay and metal art jewelry

▶ STOP 5

Cosmic Clay Studio
8252 Old Mill Hill Road,
Dowelltown
*Neo-primitive clay, lowbrow
surrealism*

▶ STOP 6

Beech Hollow Studios
578 Frazier Hollow Road,
Dowelltown
Sculpture

▶ STOP 7

Liberty Paper
1618 Cripps Road, Liberty
*Paper, fiber and unique paper
work*

▶ STOP 8

Bare Glass Studio
15910 Center Hill Dam Road,
Silver Point
Glass, clay and wood

▶ STOP 9

Red Bow Studio
176 Ponder Lane, Smithville
Pulp painter

▶ STOP 10

David Sharp Woodcarving Studio
234 Ponder Road, Smithville
Wood Carving

▶ STOP 11

Creek Bend Pottery
2566 Dry Creek Road, Dowelltown
*Wood-fired stoneware, hand-forged
metal, fiber*

▶ STOP 12

Felt Good Fibers Studio
6851 Tom Lafever Road, Silver Point
Textiles and felted wool

▶ STOP 13

Architectural Ceramics
171 Hillview Heights, Dowelltown
*Functional ceramics, metal, wood, clay
and textiles*

▶ STOP 14

Kathe Reed's Beads
445 Big Hurricane Road, Smithville
*Sterling and stone jewelry, chain mail
and coin rings, jewelry, and
hand-dyed scarves*

615-215-2500

For more information, visit offthebeatenpathtour.com.