

THIS WEEKEND

# Local artists open their studios to public

## 16th annual Shoreline Arts Trail event

11/10/17

By Lisa Reisman

A boat with rusty orange sails on majestic grey waters against a muted purple sky. Just staring at it calms and mellows.

Branford artist Anne Coffey created "Reading the Water" from papers painted in watercolors and acrylics and categorized in small bins according to color.

She's one of 33 artists from the towns of Branford, Guilford and Madi-

son, opening their studios to the public for the 16th annual Shoreline Arts Trail weekend on Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 11 and 12.

This event includes among the finest artists on the Shoreline whose work "reflect(s) mastery of methods and materials, and originality of concept," according to the Shoreline Arts Trail website.

Started in 2001 by a small group of Shoreline artists, the trail affords

visitors the opportunity to interact one-on-one with award-winning artists in their studios, explore their work spaces and take in a wide assortment of diverse and vibrant art while weaving their way along stretches of scenic shoreline.

It's also a chance for anyone with an appreciation of the work of artists, artisans and jewelers to find a one-of-a-kind piece to take

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Branford artist Anne Coffey's "Reading the Water."

Contributed photo

## TRAIL

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home or get a jump start on holiday shopping with hand-made gifts, all the while supporting local artists.

Besides Coffey's watercolor collages, Hannah Baldwin will be showing her oil paintings with the distinctive earth-tone palette four miles up Route 146 in Stony Creek. (Look for the bright yellow "Open Studio" sign to help you find a particular studio.)

Nine minutes north on Leetes Island Road are Sandra Spahr's life-like sculptures in bronze, stone,

and epoxy in Guilford. And just 2 ½ miles along Long Hill Road the ceramic plates, bowls, and plates of potter Linda Knudsen Westgard await.

In between are artists working in watercolors, pastels, oils, fibers, and mixed media. There's also a belt buckle and jewelry designer (Jackie McGuire), a papermaker (Chris Penry), and a glass fusion artist (Barbara Shulman-Kirwin).

Some artists, like Westgard, share studios. "It's a nice combination to have Steve [Plaziak's] gorgeous landscapes on the walls while I fill the center of the space with my pottery," said Westgard.

Others, like Coffey of the watercolor collages, go it alone. "It takes a certain nerve to go public with what you've been working on," she said. Still, "sharing my work with visitors never fails to be a unique and wonderful experience."

Open Studios weekend is on Saturday, Nov. 11 and Sunday, Nov. 12 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, including a trail map and listing of individual artists, as well as sponsors offering deals and discounts along the trail, visit [www.shorelineartstrail.com](http://www.shorelineartstrail.com).

Lisa Reisman may be reached at [lisareisman27@gmail.com](mailto:lisareisman27@gmail.com).