

Gallery Happenings

Megan Reiker featured Artist for September

by Sarah Hamingson



If you’ve been by Gallery Moab in the last couple months, you’ve probably noticed the new mural by our new entrance on Main Street. If you look at it closely, you’ll notice two signatures. Based on Jonathan Frank’s watercolor and ink painting “Floating in the Clear Light of a New Day,” the mural was a collaboration between Frank and local muralist Lizzie Jones, aka The Art of Lizzie. The two worked closely together over a few weeks in June to translate Jonathan’s painting into something everyone can enjoy every time they travel Main Street.

Returning for the third time, **Megan Reiker** will be our September guest artist. Her work includes landscapes and religious themes, especially celebrating women of



inspiration. Painting both in the studio and en plein air (outside on location), Megan recently participated in the St. George Plein Air Festival.

Having painted for over 26 years, Rieker began her artistic training at a high school for the arts outside Washington, D.C., and went on to earn both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the Maryland Institute College of Art. Her life and work have been shaped by experiences living in Baltimore, New York, Germany, Italy, Korea, Phoenix, Colorado Springs, Washington, D.C, and now in Pleasant Grove, Utah.

Megan’s artwork has been featured in magazines, museums, and meetinghouses, and a wide range of media,



including books, CD covers, videos, and manuals. In addition to her visual art, she is an accomplished speaker whose engagements have taken her around the world, including appearances at BYU Women’s Conference and recent presentations in Northern Italy and Prague.

We’ll be hosting Megan at an opening reception on Friday, September 4 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Stop by, enjoy some tasty treats and visit with Megan or the Gallery Moab artists. If you can’t make it to the reception, one of the artists is always on duty in the gallery.

Weaving Our Stories Conference at USU Blanding

Utah State University Blanding will host the third annual Weaving Our Stories Conference in September. The two-day conference will incorporate the theme “Honoring the Past, Creating What Comes Next” throughout the presentations and activities.

The conference will be Sept. 17-18 at the Blanding Arts & Event Center on the USU Blanding campus.

The goal of the conference is to bring together students, faculty, staff, tribal leaders, community members and organizations to explore how stories, culture, relationships and shared experiences strengthen communities and help shape the future. The conference creates opportunities for attendees to exchange ideas, strengthen relationships and explore shared opportunities and challenges.

“As Utah’s land-grant university, USU has a responsibility to serve communities across the entire state,” said Shannon Peterson, director of global learning with USU’s College of Arts and Sciences. “That means listening to the needs and experiences of the people we serve, building strong partnerships, and ensuring our students are prepared to work effectively with people from many different backgrounds and communities. Weaving Our Stories reflects that mission by creating opportunities for learning, dialogue and collaboration that benefit both the university and the communities we serve.”

The conference is sponsored by the Native American Serving Nontribal Institutions (NASNTI) program and Utah State University. Peterson said that universities play an important role in creating spaces where people can engage respectfully, ask questions and learn from different experiences. She hopes the conference continues to strengthen the partnership between USU and the communities of Utah, while encouraging thoughtful conversation.

“At a time when many communities are facing increasing polarization and misunderstanding, opportunities to listen to one another and work together are more valuable than ever,” she said.

According to a Navajo proverb, “the earth is not inherited from our ancestors. It is loaned from future generations.” Joao Bueno, NASNTI II grant director, says this proverb inspired the conference to return for a third year.

“We brought this conference back because the work of storytelling, healing and cultural preservation is never



by Marcus Jensen, News Coordinator, USU Marketing and Communications

truly finished,” he said. “It is a continuous obligation to our youth, their future children and the children of their children. I want attendees to walk away realizing the wisdom of the past and the strength to transform the future aren’t distant ideals — they are practical, they are real, they are here and now.”

The conference is open to all who wish to attend. There is

no requirement to be affiliated with USU or to be an expert in Native American or Indigenous studies.

“Whether your interests are education, leadership, culture, community development or simply gaining a deeper understanding of the people and places that make Utah unique, I believe you’ll find the experience both meaningful and inspiring,” Peterson said. “My hope is everyone leaves with a greater appreciation for one another, new relationships and new ideas for strengthening the communities we all call home.”

For more information on the Weaving Our Stories Conference and to register to attend, visit statewide.usu.edu/blanding/nasnti/conference.



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