

Gallery Negotiates Reduced-Rent Artist Storefronts in Scottsdale

How do you repopulate a gallery district hard-hit by the recession? Bentley Calverley, owner of Bentley Gallery in Scottsdale, Ariz., decided to work with local commercial property owners to negotiate lower rent for artists.

Inspired by an article about creative uses of commercial space in London and New York City—where “pop up” galleries and impromptu public art projects are appearing—Calverley called

Dewey Schade, the owner of a building on Marshall Way. She proposed that the empty storefronts become temporary studios and exhibition spaces for local artists. In exchange for reduced rent, the handpicked artists agree to move out once new long-term leases are signed.

The first artist moved in at the beginning of February, and five separate spaces are now occupied. Gallery preparator Craig Randich has spearheaded the project, locating artists who are the perfect fit, developing the vacant shops into working studios and organizing an artist co-op so more artists can take advantage of the limited space.

Although Bentley Gallery doesn't receive any direct financial benefit from serving as the mediator between the artists and the property owner, it's boosted traffic during Scottsdale's Thursday ArtWalks.

“The public benefits by being able to talk directly to the artists and watch art being created,” Randich explains. “And in turn, it benefits the artists, who have had very little interaction with collectors.” —*Claire Patterson Blome*

Bentley Gallery in Scottsdale, Ariz., has worked to make empty storefronts available to artists like Emmett F. Potter III and Spencer Hibert, who established Soyal Gallery.



A Ring a Day Keeps Disaster Away

Since the beginning of the year, jeweler Carrie Nunes has committed herself to making a ring a day—365 in all—to benefit the Craft Emergency Relief Fund + Artists' Emergency Resources (CERF+). The rings vary greatly in style and price; some go for as little as \$1. So far, Nunes has raised \$1,200 for the organization, and she still has many more rings to go.

The cause hit even closer to home for Nunes after floods hit her hometown, Nashville, Tenn., this spring. “This project is more personal than ever as CERF+ is now helping artists right here in Tennessee who were affected by the flood,” she says. Luckily, Nunes' studio and home were spared.

For the past 25 years, CERF+ (the plus was recently added to reflect the organization's expanded role in helping artists) has offered grants, loans and other assistance to craft artists suffering career-threatening emergencies. Programs like its new website, www.studioprotector.org, launched May 1, aim to help artists prepare for disasters before they occur.

To purchase one of Nunes' Ring-a-Day rings, visit her Etsy shop at www.etsy.com/shop/CarrieNunes.

—*Sara Baker*



Jeweler Carrie Nunes is making a ring a day to benefit CERF+.

