

Interview with *Michigan BLUE Magazine*

www.mibluemag.com

§ What defines you?

Studio b. prides itself in offering "art for everyone." We've created a space where anyone can feel comfortable viewing and buying art whether that is a hand made piece of jewelry or a large scale painting or sculpture. Our gallery has a clean, sophisticated feel and at the same time exudes a sense of warmth that invites people to enjoy the art in a non pretentious environment.

§ What is your niche?

Our niche is "Fine Art & Fabulous Finds" meaning we offer art and objects of interest from local artists and many artists from across the globe.

§ What is unique to your art, group, or scene?

Three Oaks has become the "cultural hub" for art in Harbor Country. Our charming walking town offers many galleries, theatres, specialty shops and high end restaurants all while retaining its small town hospitality feel. Three Oaks, just an hour and a half drive from Chicago is the perfect day trip for those looking to escape the city for a refreshing jaunt to the country.

§ Who is your customer?

Our customers tend to be seasonal, either weekenders on vacation or those who own second homes in the area.

§ What do you promote?

We promote artists from all over the world. Our collections include paintings, sculpture, ceramics, glass, jewelry and a fine selection of vintage treasures.

§ What brought your artist community together?

I believe many of us have planted the seeds of our dreams in Three Oaks and fortunately the timing was right. Last year the state of Michigan provided the town with a grant to renovate the downtown area. This project along with an influx of new high end businesses concentrated in the downtown area has created a draw for the area and has resulted in a group of business owners working towards similar goals.

§ What is the common tie that binds your art or artists?

Each of our artists are passionate about creating work and getting it out there for people to enjoy. Many of our artists are emerging artists, retired artists or those who maintain their art careers while working full time jobs. Because of this we can offer their work at prices that make sense to our market therefore meeting our mission of making art accessible to everyone.

§ What are your showcase events? Festivals? Gallery hops?

We participate in the Three Oaks "Third Saturday" art walks. Galleries, studios and other business keep longer evening hours the third Saturday of each month and open up to the public with demonstrations, special shows, wine and cheese etc. We also participate in Harbor Country's "Art Attack" festivities each April.

§ Does your (gallery) have a regional feel or excitement?

Yes, along with national and international artists we do represent local artists. We also work to find art that appeals to people in the area. For example we opened the season this year with a show titled "The Bathers." This body of work from internationally recognized, New York based artist Marjorie Price represented figures in water (women swimming.) This work seemed fitting for the area as it appeals to so many of the water enthusiasts who love living near Michigan's wonderful lakes.

§ What trends do you see, artistically or regionally, in artwork or in purchases?

I'm finding that people love to buy work from around the globe. To find a spectacular painting from Paris, etching from Lithuania or fine piece of sea glass jewelry from an island far away is a special find for those when they come upon Studio b. in Three Oaks.

§ What trends do you see in art as an investment?

It's been my experience that the new generation of collectors seems to be drawn to work from emerging artists. As the artist grows, the work matures and the investor's collection grows increasing in value over the years.

§ Do you find yours to be an art-educated audience?

I feel that our audience varies. Many are art-educated, either professionals in the field or those who have learned about art over the years as a hobby or "sport" so to speak. On the other hand we see a good number of those exploring art for the first time and part of the fun for us is to introduce them to the mediums and to make them feel comfortable asking questions and interacting with the work.

§ What else would you want *Michigan BLUE* readers to know?

Studio b. is open seasonally from April through December each year. We are open weekends; Friday noon to 8:00, Saturday 10 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Sunday's noon to 6:00. All hours are EST and special studio visits can be arranged by appointment. For details on upcoming events visit www.studiobgallery.com or call 269-756-9954.