

# ICB Artists Association all about connectivity

By Andy Jones  
Sausalito Marin Scope



Most residents only think about Sausalito's Industrial Center Building once a year, during the building's open studios in early December. But if the newly formed ICB Artists Association has its druthers, the collective will become a much more visible force in the city.

"This building has existed as an island in Sausalito for a long time," said association board member and ICB tenant Barry Peterson. "The association is going to hopefully get involved locally, in politics and the local arts scene."

The artists association was formed to help ICB tenants with outreach to the community, including public relations and efforts to sell their work. ICB is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year and the association plans mark the occasion by branching out into the community.

"For the last 40 years, the artists had the open studios as the one event that galvanized them as a group and allowed them to come together," said board President Suzie Buchholz. "Now that we have an association, there's more than one thing to bring us together. We haven't adopted a formal mission yet, but one of our objectives is to help the artist with professional enrichment."

Another goal is to allow more interaction with the community at ICB. "A lot of our events will be for the community. We'll have recognized artists doing talks and slide shows. Part of what we want to do is bring the community into ICB at times other than during the open studios," Buchholz said.

To achieve these goals, the association will create a meeting space in the building, a place for exhibits and demonstrations open to the public.

"There are enough of us here who want to do more than just sell art," said Peterson. "The more we're in the papers and the more we contribute to the community, the more good will we'll get back."

"Not a lot of people are aware of us and a personal goal is to help the community recognize the importance of art in the community," Buchholz said. "The whole area north of the bridge is an important area for artists and Sausalito has a rich history of being a part of the Bay Area artists' movement."

Of the 108 artists who work out of ICB studios, so far around 70 have joined the association. They volunteer for committees that put out the association newsletter, work on the open studios event, handle public relations and partake in gallery dealings.

"Most of the artists have joined and we're only a month or two old," Buchholz said. "I'm very pleased with the number of artists who've already joined. More important to me is that not only have they joined, they've also signed up to volunteer and put some time and effort behind the association."

Peterson said the design of the studio tends to discourage group interaction. "It operates like the suburbs: people don't interact and there's no downtown. It's a long row of doors that are closed and everyone's in isolation." He said the association's newsletter is aimed at creating more interconnectivity and that the plan to create a gallery space will help create a stronger sense of community. "We're doing all this to get some kind of fellowship in the building. Once that's established, we can go out and do more with the community."

As one of their first acts of community involvement, the association will host the Sausalito Chamber of Commerce mixer Aug. 7.

"It's a tribute to the board that we've been able to do so much so quickly," Buchholz said. "We've had to create everything from scratch. It's been exciting to watch this come together. Many of the artists have stepped up and turned this into something that benefits everyone in a huge way."

Photo caption: Due to the isolated nature of the studios at the Industrial Center Building, the mail box area is one of the few spots in the building where artists can actually bump into each other and have a chat. The ICB Artists Association hopes to create a gathering space in the building in order to create a great sense of community and to provide a setting to host events that would be open to the public.

Photo by Suzie Buchholz

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