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## Neighbors



Photograph by Jacqueline Ramseyer

**Inspired Work:** A display of work by local artists at the Triton Museum includes that of Campbell artists (from left) Cyndee Newick, with her gourd piece 'Canyon Spirit'; and Annie Olander, with her acrylic painting 'Reflections of Vasona.'

## Art abounds in Triton gardens

By Lynn Crocker

Two Campbell-based artists are making a name for themselves outside the Orchard City community. Annie Olander and Cyndee Newick are participants in "ArtFest at the Triton." The art festival—also known as "AVArtFest," with "AV" standing for "Alliance of Visual Artists"—is an annual competition and show at the Triton Museum in Santa Clara.

Olander, a native Californian and member of the Campbell Artist Guild, works with acrylics to re-create landscapes and street scenes she encounters while traveling around town or abroad.

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"I take pictures wherever I go and paint from the photos," Olander says.

In 1948 Olander attended the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland for a year before deciding to leave school and secure a job. Her time at the college taught her the basics of art, and she used these skills, along with her natural talent, to cultivate a career in advertising.

"In those days, items for catalogs and advertisements were drawn, not photographed," Olander says.

Olander worked freelance for the former well-known Hart's Department Store in San Jose, where she drew pots and pans for its advertising department, and for the Emporium in San Francisco.

"I was scared to death to show my portfolio, but I did it," Olander says. "One art director gave me a box of powder to draw. I spent all night working on it and brought the drawing in the next day. I guess I did fine, because I got the job."

Then in 1952 she decided to take a leap of faith and, at age 22, Olander left California for New York.

"I didn't know a soul, but I was looking for adventure and work," she says. "I ended up working for Interstate Department Stores in Manhattan."

Eventually Olander moved back to her home state and has resided in Santa Clara Valley for the past 40 years. After raising her family, she returned to her basic love of painting.

While Olander uses canvas and acrylics to express her creativity, Newick uses gourds and inks.

A member of the Calabash Club of Silicon Valley, Newick is excited to be participating in ArtFest.

"It's a really nice show," Newick says. "Lots of great artwork and a really wonderful environment with cool trees and grass."

After dabbling in various arts and crafts, Newick hit upon

decorative gourds about five years ago.

"I wanted to work with something natural," she says, "and I enjoy the history of gourds. Gourds have been used for thousands of years as containers, bowls and instruments and for other functional purposes."

Newick originally tried growing the plants herself but discovered the weather of Northern California wasn't conducive to cultivating gourds, which are closely related to cucumbers, squash and melons and prefer hot, dry weather.

"I get most of my gourds from Southern California," she says. "The skins are nice and thick, which is important when cutting and carving."

Newick says each gourd has its own uniqueness, and she lets the shape and imperfections dictate what the design will be.

Newick loves the fact that her creations are one of a kind and cannot be reproduced.

"Even if I do the same design over and over, each gourd is a different shape and color, so the end result is unique."

This is the ninth year that the Triton Museum of Art in Santa Clara has hosted the ArtFest.

The event is on June 5 and 6 at the Triton Museum. It is a casual, outdoor event from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the lush sculpture gardens of the museum and features a juried and judged art competition and fine-art sale.

*The Triton Museum of Art is located at 1505 Warburton Ave. in Santa Clara. For more information, call 408.247.3754 or visit the website at [www.tritonmuseum.org](http://www.tritonmuseum.org).*

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