



ART

The Experience of Art

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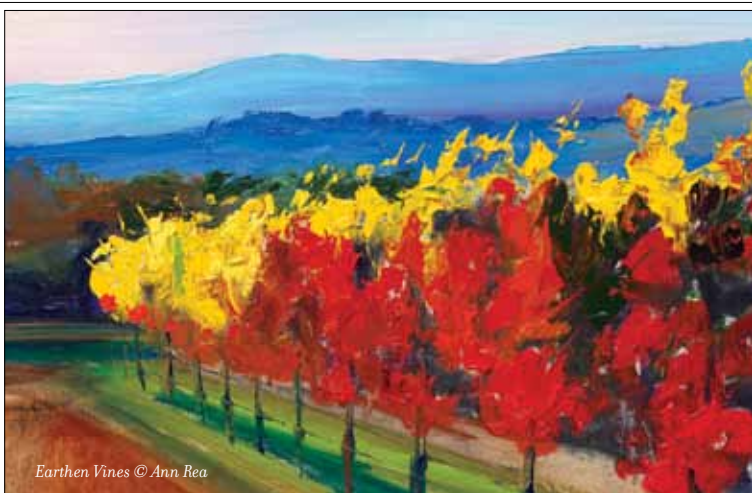
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Earthen Vines © Ann Rea

THE EXPERIENCE OF ART

BY Cindie Farley

Artist. Entrepreneur. Mentor. San Francisco resident Ann Rea is the embodiment of success in whatever she endeavors to do. As a painter, her mission is to “savor the colors of the moment.” As an entrepreneur, her goal is to build a profitable business. As a mentor, her dream is to inspire others by sharing her story. In the span of only a few short years, she has attained ample success to fulfill all three. With passion and vision, she has now created something never before available to patrons of art—an “Experience of Art.” It is an opportunity for an unprecedented and meaningful experience with the artist.

Her story is one of personal triumph and marketing savvy. Rea studied fine arts and graduated from the prestigious Cleveland Institute of Art with a degree in industrial design. She decided



a creative career wasn't practical, however, so she opted for a more conventional path in the corporate world. It turned out to be a disillusioned one, and combined with challenges in her personal life, resulted in a seven-year hiatus from using her artistic talent and abilities.

A series of life-affirming events prompted Rea to reconsider her direction and ultimately realize that life is too short to avoid pursuing her passion and purpose. While still working in project management consulting, she took up oil painting again as a source of inspiration and healing. She began painting serene still life, then moved to landscapes and achieved success with her vibrant images of vineyards around the greater Bay Area. Notably, the first vineyards she painted belonged to the pioneering viticulturist and grape breeder, Dr. Harold Olmo, who was instrumental in the development of California's wine industry, as far back as the 1930s.

When Ann Rea creates a work of art, it's not simply an image of what she sees. She views it as a reflection of her creative state, and that forces her to be highly attuned to the feelings and emotions she imparts through it. With her colors inspired by sunlight and her subjects inspired by nature, she paints, in part, in the *plein air* tradition of the French Impressionists. She is influenced by her contemporary mentor, Wayne Thiebaud, and her paintings possess a positive, uplifting mood often described as peaceful, dreamy, or happy.

On average, she completes 20 oil studies in preparation for each large-scale commissioned painting. She uses charcoal to sketch her studies on fine Arches French watercolor paper, and for her paintings on canvas, she uses the same pure oil pigments Van Gogh used. The oil paint has been produced by the same company



in Holland since 1664. Rea does not use any mixing mediums, turpentine, or varnish. This is the greenest and least toxic method of oil painting.

Always seeing the bigger picture, Rea is diligent in maintaining that focus. She does extensive work designed to facilitate individual development and maximize intelligent business strategy. As a result, she has created a concept to develop a niche market for her paintings. It is a wholly unique and extraordinary idea, one that no other artist offers, and one she calls the “Experience of Art.” This fresh, new approach to acquiring a work of art completely engages the patron, from initial inspiration to end celebration.

Each year, only a limited number of patrons will join Rea in an “Experience of Art.” If selected, they are presented with an elegantly wrapped invitation to an “Experience of Art,” in which they themselves will provide the first spark of inspiration by



choosing the landscape. It may be a vineyard, a natural landscape, or a private garden. Rea then spends some time getting to know the patron, and together they experience the setting, one that usually holds special memory or meaning.

Rea returns to the landscape to complete a series of field studies in oil, one or more of which the patron will select for her to reinterpret in a bespoke, or custom canvas, to suit their personal preference. Week by week, she offers the patron an intimate peek into her creative process via a dedicated online diary. This exciting aspect of the experience allows them to actually follow Rea’s inner dialogue about what’s catching her eye and inspiring the evolution of their painting. Upon completion, Rea unveils the painting in a celebration and presents the patron with a signed storybook of their “Experience of Art.” This beautifully appointed book includes the studies of their painting as well as selected content from the creative diary.

Ann Rea’s “Experience of Art” truly adds the most memorable and meaningful work of art to any patron’s collection. Their personal involvement adds many levels of depth to the finished painting as well as its story, both of which can be handed down and revisited time and again. As Rea recalls, the greatest compliment she has ever received was from a couple who said she had “helped them gain deeper appreciation for life through her art.”

Rea notes that since introducing the “Experience of Art,” it is typically offered as a gift, whether in celebration of a milestone event, anniversary, or birthday, or as a meaningful bestowal of appreciation to a client. Indeed, it is an unforgettable gesture, as well as an exquisite idea for the person who has—or has experienced—everything. Her works of art can be tailored for any setting, from home to office or from yacht to wine cellar.

When Rea isn’t immersed in savoring the colors of the moment, she’s immersed in the many ways she is expanding her business. In addition to her corporate gifting and design trade programs, she does collaborative canvas events, art and wine pairings, public speaking, and artist business coaching. She has also established her Giving Forward Program in which she sponsors a nonprofit organization each quarter.

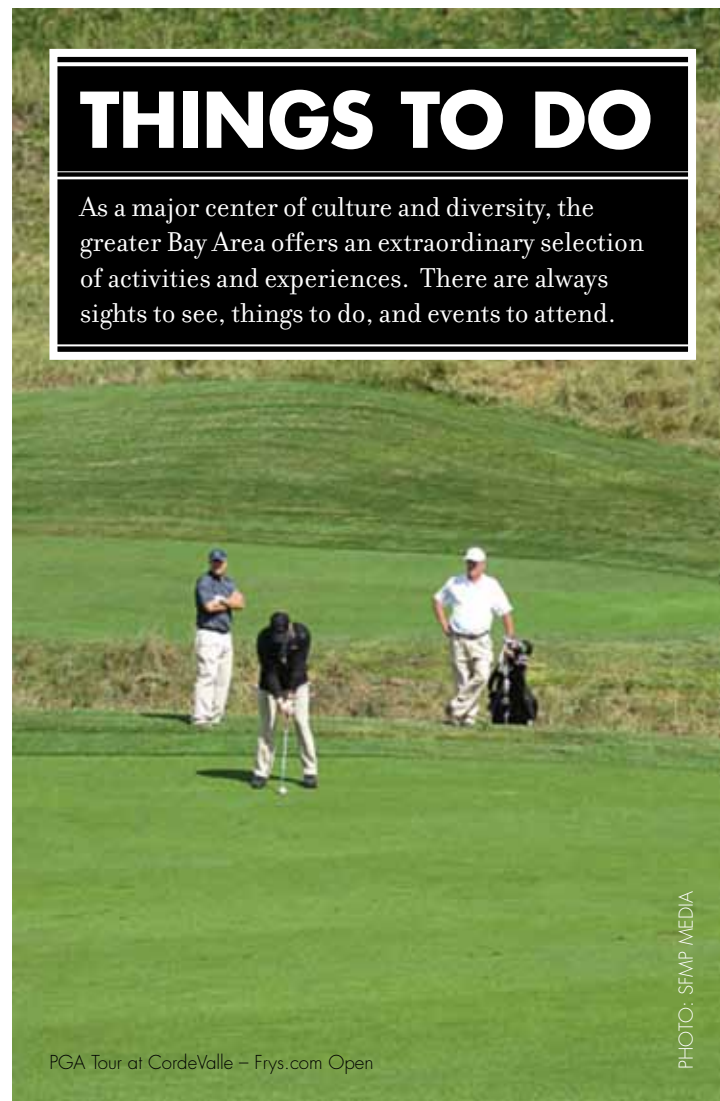
Fortune magazine has called her “the Practical Painter.” *Fine Living* magazine calls her “the wine country it girl.” And American art icon Wayne Thiebaud highly recommends her as “intelligent and sensitive with a deep capacity for serious and sustained work. She is keen to share this talent.”

Although it’s not difficult to be impressed by this dynamic woman who is as open and colorful as her paintings, Ann Rea herself would rather inspire than impress. It’s quite possible she may have both markets cornered. **LRSV**

www.annrea.com Photos: Ann Rea ©

THINGS TO DO

As a major center of culture and diversity, the greater Bay Area offers an extraordinary selection of activities and experiences. There are always sights to see, things to do, and events to attend.



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