

[ gallery hopping ]

## Beauty boldly portrayed

By BROOKSIE BERGEN

Color and form applied by a heavy hand or with a light touch, is an expression of life as portrayed by artists. Like voyeurs, we read their souls through their talented hands. And each artist has his or her own unique way of sharing their visions.

Although works of art were standardized in earlier times, many artists chafed at the restrictions imposed. One of those rebels was Dutch artist Franz Hals, who tired of portraying wealthy dignitaries with their white, pleated ruffs and somber black costumes and sought subject matter in local settings to relieve his boredom. He used any surface available to paint his picturesque

characters, often finding beauty in squalor. His bold brushwork and vivid color received acclaim.

Area galleries are filled with the explosive works of men and women who face life as boldly as Hals, and see all aspects of it as fodder for their palettes, kilns or potters wheels. Focusing on color, form and composition, they invite the viewer to see what they see, feel what they feel, and what emerges is beauty boldly portrayed.

Just as Hals rebelled against the stiff portraiture of his day, Nat Krate, a Florida resident currently showing at the Provenance Gallery on Palm Avenue, has perfected the potency of his singular vision, and creates paintings and



COURTESY PHOTO

"The Gift" by Nat Krate, oil on linen, 36" by 28" at Provenance Gallery.

portraits of striking imagery. His bold approach inspires beautiful, sensual, offbeat works. Miki Boni's imaginative and brilliant "Beginnings" at Kaos Gal-

lery South is another daring and exciting departure to a world of fantasy.

Learn about a true revisionist, artist Vincent Van Gogh, through a series of lectures at the Charlotte County Art Guild's Visual Arts Center in Punta Gorda (details in the gallery listings under "Just South"). The festivities commemorating the artist begin on Oct. 16. His haunting works, distinguished by artistically effective brush strokes, are those of a man fighting for the freedom to express his genius in his own way. His friend, Paul Gauguin, sought expression in less turbulent ways by escaping to Tahiti and rendering spiritual images of the birds and animals of his personal paradise.

Local artist Kristin Gustafson says her early works were inspired by Gauguin, whose bold colors and ornamental expressionistic style marked him as a true artist of the Symbolist period. Gustafson, who is showing at the Fiori Gallery, says she broke away from

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922-7169. Featuring the artwork of Maris including her Open Door acrylic painting underwater scenes and original oil art from the '60s.

**Miguel's Digital Studio**, 334 S. Washington Bldg., 951-1873. Giclee prints on canvas and paper; paintings from your photos.

**Missing Link**, 556 Pineapple Ave. S., 366-6111. Fine selection of museum-quality objects representing the cultures of Africa, Asia, the Americas. Featuring antique Asian furniture, antiques and contemporary photography.

**Museum of Asian Art**, 640 S. Washington Bldg., 954-7117, www.museumasianart.org. Art from China, Thailand, Cambodia, Nepal and Bhutan represented in the permanent collection. Works in bronze, wood, iron, marble and silk and the Yangtze River collection of Chinese jades. "Focus: Asia," continues through Oct. 24: A collection of 19th-century photographs compiled by Bill and Hope West, represent various Asian cultures as seen through the eyes of pioneering photographers of the 1800s.

**Pamela Jablonski Fine Arts and Restoration**, Seventh St., 955-4278.

**Sarasota Artist's Gallery Inc.**, 1400 Cattleman Road, 379-5330. Through Oct. 31: "Equestrian Show," equestrian artworks by Frank Cols whose "Kaleidoscope Horse," a five-foot, hand-carved carousel pony, is painted in a rainbow of vivid colors with gold highlights.



# Style

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her batik-style renderings on silk in Minnesota to "thaw out, and learn to chill out" in Florida with its flora, fauna and beaches. Focusing on watercolor and acrylic, her brilliant, decorative tropical works are enhanced by metallic glazing that adds texture and depth. If you peer closely into her paintings, you can see tiny creatures almost hidden by the foliage. Her canvases are also featured in the Towles Court Art Colony and Longboat Key Art Center.

(Note: Some galleries are closed on Mondays; call ahead.)

**Artists from Hawaii and California**, 388-5331. Artists from Hawaii and California. The 24-year-old gallery has a clientele of 70 percent first-time art collectors, due in part, to its unique collector financing programs. Artwork consists of aquatic-themed originals or limited editions, including bronzes, pewter-embedded lucite sculptures and mixed media paintings.