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Exploring the Fine Arts

Enormous breadth, world-class quality

For more than a century, the inspiring beauty of the Saugatuck area has attracted artists and patrons of fine arts. The proliferation of galleries and artist studios, the street art fairs, and many diverse do-it-yourself art opportunities have built its reputation as the "Art Coast of Michigan". From lively clusters of downtown galleries, to the secluded campus of *Ox-Bow School of Art* and the intriguing array of artist studios dotting the neighboring countryside, connoisseurs of creativity find a congenial arts haven delightful to explore.

The mix of galleries in and around Saugatuck/Douglas comprises its own dazzling palette of the artistic experience. Art classes for children and adults abound in the summertime, too. The newly-renovated *Saugatuck Center for the Arts* hosts a year 'round, ever-changing variety of arts, cultural performances, and classes and workshops by various artists in their preferred media. From humorous to sublime, classical to contemporary, provincial to universal, or intricate glass bead making to oil portraiture, the art experiences to be found in the Saugatuck area offers enormous breadth as well as world-class quality.

In the heart of Saugatuck, high-style contemporary crafts, wearable art, ethnic artifacts, furniture and fine art await the visitor at *Good Goods*, a gallery housed in a restored Victorian boardinghouse. One block north *Discovery Art Center* features area artists who work in a variety of media. And a few storefronts farther you will

viewing the artist's *Galaxy Series* which features sparkling ground glass crystals in the paint, a NASA representative commissioned Bruce to create "Red Nebula" based on an image returned by the Hubble telescope. Next door is the *James Brandess Studios & Gallery, Inc.*, this extremely popular artist can be observed right in the front window as he lays on the thick impasto of a new oil painting or portrait in his signature style. Around the corner on Hoffman Street, *Koorey Creations* presents original art and hand-crafted jewelry set with unique gemstones.

Just over the bridge in Douglas is the *Button Pettey Gallery* housed in an elegantly restored historic building right on Blue Star Highway. Here one finds original paintings, bronzes and garden sculpture – displayed both indoors and outdoors – by nationwide artists. On Center Street *Water Street Gallery* showcases contemporary paintings, prints, photographs and sculptures of over 50 accomplished regional artists—some of them delightfully whimsical! And just before Wade's Bayou at the end of Center Street, the new *Rubinkam Studio-Gallery* displays Steve Rubinkam's impressionistic paintings in acrylics on canvas, paper or Masonite.

The diversity of the global cultural experience is reflected by the Saugatuck/Douglas area's specialty galleries. *Amaru Leather*, in its location on Griffith Street in Saugatuck, is a craft gallery concentrating on custom creations in leather by two resident designers. Just across the way on Culver, *Amazwi Contemporary Art Gallery* features colorful paintings, extraordinary sculptures and fine crafts from Africa. On Water Street visit *The Tuscan Pot* where artist Rachael Hirt handcrafts Italianate majolica pottery and mosaic tiles.

Located just north of Saugatuck on Blue Star Highway, you'll find sculptor *Marcia Perry's Ark Gallery & Sculpture Studio*, an inspiring nature-lovers' environment featuring soulful fine art and carving workshops. Southeast of Saugatuck a little farther out in the countryside visit *Khnemu Studio & Art Gallery on Fernwood Farm* where artist Dawn Soltysiak creates her uniquely beautiful pottery in a bucolic country setting. Also out that way is the *Peachbelt Studio and Gallery* housed in a historic red brick one-room schoolhouse circa 1867 surrounded by farms, fields and orchards. Here artist Dawn Stafford creates brilliantly colored floral, still life, landscape and other oil paintings. Also, galleries participating in an area-wide cooperative called *Blue Coast Artists* sponsor popular open houses several times each year in their studios that dot the countryside in all directions.

There are also opportunities – particularly fun on rainy days – for visitors and families with children to create their own art at *Express Yourself Art Barn*, *Ox-Bow Institute* and *Saugatuck Center for the Arts*.

come across the *Janice Miles Gallery*, featuring original watercolors by this British artist.

The *Bruce Baughman Studio & Gallery* on Butler Street displays acclaimed reverse acrylic paintings, including landscapes, figures, florals and abstracts, as well as Bruce's own giclée prints in signed editions of 300. Upon

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