

Art and Architecture Enhance Our Lives

Together We Build, July 27, 2022

by Thomas Beck, AIA, NCARB

I was asked to provide a statement as to why T.W. Beck Architects supports the Estes Park Studio Tour. I wrote "Architecture is Art in Engineering. Both Art and Architecture enhance our lives and community." Our community is blessed with many talented artists. On August 6 and 7 the public will have the opportunity to visit the studios of some of those artists, see them working with the tools of their trades, and purchase work directly from those artists. (<https://epstudiotour.com/>)

Full disclosure, my wife Laura Davis is one of the artists on the tour, studio #2. Her work explores the possibilities of photography and digital technology as tools for creating art. Straight, unmanipulated, photographs "directing our attention to, and celebrating the patterns that surround us in the natural world" or collage using photography interwoven with patterns and Celtic knots can be found in her wall art, jigsaw puzzles, note cards, and some fabric wearables such as scarves. The studio is an addition built on top of the original garage of the house. Passive solar is in abundance with large banks of windows which frame Longs Peak, a gnarled ancient tree, and a meadow full of wildflowers. The vaulted two-story ceiling was created using structural timber trusses, inspired by a 1908 covered bridge near my grandparent's farm close to Bainbridge, IN. The solar panels on the house provide 100% of our electricity, and net metering allows us to provide power to the grid.

While not a "home tour" the tour will introduce you to some fantastic home studios in our community. The spaces the artists have created, the buildings they occupy, and the landscapes they reside in are inspired. We have not personally seen all of the studios. We describe studios here that we have seen.

Studio #1 is Karen Barnett, a painter and ceramicist whose studio overlooks the North End, Lumpy Ridge, Longs Peak and most of the Estes Valley. A beautiful studio and gorgeous view.

Studio #3 is that of Deedee Hampton, who is sharing her studio with guest artist Jolee Hedlund. Her studio and garden are nestled at the base of Lumpy Ridge. She has described her space as something of a Folk Art Museum and her garden is filled with colorful mosaics and much more.

Studio #8 on the tour is the workshop of John Lynch, who is hosting guest artist Wade Johnston. The large workshop is full of the raw materials of reclaimed trees and the woodworking tools for "finding a way for Mother Nature to have a second chance to show off her beauty." His showroom is on the second floor of the workshop.

Studio #7 is that of John Long, who is hosting guest artist photographer Jerry Allison. His Carriage Hills "Blue Gate Studio" is also on the Estes Park Garden Club's 2022 Garden Days which will happen on Sunday July 31st.

Studio #9 belongs to Monte Michener, the sculptor of driftwood horses you may have seen about town, including some by the river in front of his wife Ravit's wellness spa, Elements of Touch. This is also another magical garden space, one with a wonderful view of Lumpy Ridge.

Studio #10 is that of Joe Arnold, whose Sacred Art Garden is filled with prayer wheels and shrines. A large "bottle gate" combines doors from a saloon in Punjab, India, a brass gate latch from Morocco, and colorful blue and green bottles backlit with natural light.

In another part of town are the studios of Amy Fox (#4), and Robert Wands (#5), whose studios we have not seen. Studio #6 is of painters Cathy Goodale and Jim Biggers, perched on the mountain in Charles Heights. The studios occupy most of the first story of the house, which has another of those spectacular views of Estes Park.

These artists have both artwork and workspaces which will feed your soul. And you can purchase a little piece of that creativity for your own home. What could be better than that?

Beck, Thomas W. "Art and Architecture Enhance Our Lives", *Estes Park Trail Gazette*, Friday, July 29, 2022, URL <https://www.eptail.com/2022/07/27/art-and-architecture-enhance-our-lives/>