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Empowering artists at a new gallery

By R.J. MARX

This weekend, the two-month-old A.R.T.S. gallery in Croton Falls will be celebrating its May artists with a display of paintings, sculpture, designer fashion and photography. The work, from artists around the region, marks the third exhibition for the gallery space, which is located at 4 W. Cross St. in the town, next to Croton Creek Restaurant. This month's kickoff begins with a reception tomorrow, Saturday, May 8, from 3 to 6 p.m., at the gallery.

The name stands for "Artists Ready to Sell" according to co-founder Dyan Rosenberg, who began the gallery along with five other painters, Suzanne Ashley, Marjie Kern, Carol Carpintieri, Phyllis Smith and Alex Tureaud.

"We're all artists; we were board members of the Artists Association at the Katonah Museum of Art, of which I am the president," Ms. Rosenberg said. "It was one of those beautiful things that happen. We had known each other for a while. We were on a mission to look for gallery space, and we all just collectively said, 'Let's take it.'"

She said the landlord provided a "terrific deal," and the store had a March opening. Artists submit their work via e-mail, and the A.R.T.S. staff reviews the work. If selected, they pay a fee for renting the space, for up to three months, and the gallery takes a 25 percent commission. The A.R.T.S. staff mounts the show, sits in the space and takes care of sales and show changes.

"This gives them a chance to take charge of their careers," Ms. Rosenberg said. "If you're an artist, you know how difficult it is to receive a gallery showing. This gives artists a way of taking charge of their careers."

While the co-founders all came together at the Katonah Museum of Art, Ms. Rosenberg said the gallery is not affiliated with the museum, but rather, is a commercial business venture. "We're trying to establish a marketplace for artists," she said. "We're looking for jewelers, potters, and we rent them table space or cabinet space. We have two clothing designers, Susan Miranda and Lynn Wood. We have



A.R.T.S. sculptures by Doc Dochtermann, of Bedford, and clothing by Susan Miranda will be on display at the A.R.T.S. gallery this month. Right, "A Pitcher is Worth 1,000 Words," by artist Dyan Rosenberg.

handbags as well. We've sold several photographs, and we have about 23 artists each month.

"This week we have white birch furniture made of natural white birch and pine and fir," Ms. Rosenberg said. "We have the clothing boutique, which is very popular, and showing very well, we have crocheted jewelry and hats."

Coming up at the opening this weekend is artwork from Belle Manes, an abstract oil painter, and works by Pound Ridger Michelle Gage, a watercolor painter.

"Suzanne Ashley has a beautiful scenic painting of Spain, which is in the window, and Phyllis Smith just hung a show of paintings and photographs," Ms. Rosenberg said. "You can hardly tell which is which, the painting or the photograph, she is so meticulous. She takes a photograph of flowers, then she sits down and does an oil painting of the photograph, then she does a photograph of the oil painting, and then she hangs them side by side."

In terms of her own style, Ms. Rosenberg said that her process is free and spontaneous. "I'm versatile and comfortable moving from strong graphic shapes and patterns to loose expressionistic lines and moving forms," she said. "My work ranges from abstract expressionistic landscapes

to still lifes to figurative pictures saturated with color. Color is where the excitement lies for me. It's my way of speaking. The works seem to reveal a place in time, a compressed history waiting to explode. It's as if I'm gazing into a mirror of memories, and as with most art, the metaphors and meanings are implicit. Hopefully, the viewer is enticed to look, listen and find some echo of emotion or spirit reaching out to connect."

Ms. Rosenberg's debuted her fiber art in the 1980s, with needlepoint rugs, handbags and tapestries, as well as knitted and crocheted clothing. These were exhibited at various galleries in the tristate area. In 1991 Ms. Rosenberg opened Dyangi Decorative Arts Gallery in Greenwich, Conn., and four years later she created a partnership, opening The 3 Friends Art Gallery in North Salem. In 2000 she established the firm Roseclyff Design/Build, specializing in architectural and furniture design.

Artists can rent walls or table space. She invites the public to come and sit in the gallery, socialize or hold receptions. Hours are Wednesdays through Saturday, noon to 6 p.m. Tomorrow's opening will include a wine-and-cheese reception. For more information, contact the gallery at 276-2209.