



Meet an Elf and Create a New Christmas Tradition

After last year's successful holiday book signing of "The Elf on the Shelf: A Christmas Tradition," Haus Fortuna has been selected from hundreds of applicants to be the host of an encore holiday book signing. The family event is scheduled for Sunday, December 5, from 2:30 to 4:30 PM at the home décor and gift store, 111 2nd Street in Historic Downtown Petaluma.

Children will be able to meet the authors of the successful "Elf on the Shelf" book line and parents can purchase copies of the book and its companion, "The Elf on the Shelf: A Christmas Activity Book."

Written by Carol Aebersold and Chanda Bell and illustrated by Coe Steinwart, "The Elf on the Shelf" story sprung from Aebersold's own family traditions. When her children were young they wanted to know how Santa knew if they were naughty or nice. Aebersold used a toy elf doll from her own childhood to become the watch guard of her kids' behavior. He would arrive around Thanksgiving and report to Santa each night. The next morning the children would awake and the elf would be moved (with some help from mom or dad.)

According to Aebersold,

her children "would race each other out of bed to try and be the first to spy him in his new position." Through the years the tradition was perfected and rules were introduced. To preserve his mystique, the children weren't allowed to touch the elf, but they were allowed to talk to him. Eventually, the children gave him a name and adopted him into the family.

This family tradition has grown into the wildly successful holiday book and a companion activity book. The store is currently selling copies and gift sets, as well as taking reservations for the autographed books that are guaranteed to sell out. Also available are stuffed elves to snuggle with, elf skirts for girl elves, and elf holiday ornaments.

"We are so excited to be able to showcase "The Elf on the Shelf" for a second year," Haus Fortuna owner Karla Schikore said. "Many children and parents were disappointed they couldn't make it last year and others enjoyed sharing the tale with their own families and wanted to get extra copies for gifts."

A portion of the proceeds from the "Elf on the Shelf" sales will go to the Toys For Tots Foundation.

For more information, go to hausfortuna.com or find them on Facebook and Twitter.

ARTS



New Art Exhibit Transforms Ordinary to Extraordinary

A two-year exhibit celebrates the work of 13 regional sculptors and painters displayed through interior and exterior spaces.

"Transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary" — this is the goal and the unifying theme of a new two-year art exhibit now open at Wells Fargo Center for the Arts. Each piece in the exhibit incorporates commonplace items in unorthodox and creative ways — changing scale, composition and perspective to make the art unique and hard to miss. Featuring 18 works by 13 outstanding regional artists, the pieces will be displayed in exterior and interior exhibits throughout the Arts Center's campus through the summer of 2012.

Entitled "Making the Ordinary Look Extraordinary," the exhibit incorporates new works with pieces currently on long-term loan to the Arts Center. "The art commands your eye, focuses your attention and

activates your imagination," says curator Gwenda Joyce. "It prompts you to take a second and third look in order to fully see what the art represents."

While Pamela Merory Dernham probes the intricacies of interpersonal interactions with abstract wire sculptures on display in the Center's north and south stairwells, Ryan Carrington strives to honor blue collar workers through outdoor sculpture that addresses their unglamorous but essential work. A self-proclaimed "collector of all objects of all sorts," Diana Meehan is motivated to reform found items into new possibilities and distinctive pieces of art — a stunning example of which can be seen outside the Center's box office in a piece entitled "Migration." On display in the Sculpture Courtyard, two pieces by nationally recognized wildlife sculptor R.W. McBride convey McBride's love of nature through his art.

"Our goal is to present art in its various forms, from

world-class performing art to outstanding visual art" says Anita Wigglesworth, who oversees the Center's arts and outreach programs. With performances and events that attract nearly half-a-million people a year and an expansive campus with high visibility from the Highway 101 corridor, the Center offers excellent exposure for local and regional artists.

In addition to sculpture and visual art exhibits, the Center's Student Art Gallery also regularly displays the work of up-and-coming young artists, kindergarten through high school. Currently on display is an exhibit entitled "Native American Art and Culture" from third graders at Santa Rosa Charter School for the Arts.

The new sculpture exhibit and student art exhibit are available for viewing free of charge during the Arts Center's normal business hours and during weekend and evening hours whenever the Center is open for performances and other events.