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What is Hidden, In the Hidden Studios Art Tour?

Many guests to the Hidden Studios Art Tour (HSAT) seem to find their way to the studios, so the studios may be said to be just hard to find without the map. But there are other qualities of the Hidden Studios that without consideration, remain hidden. Let me explain.

There are a large number of art venues, even in our immediate area of East Central Wisconsin. Art walks, art tours, art shows, art fairs, art gallery activities, and even an art museum can be found presenting the wonders of the creative enterprise. While many of these art venues are very good, there is only one Hidden Studios Art Tour, Art Along the Ice Age Trail.

The HSAT is somewhat unique in important ways. The Tour is medium sized; it is not big with only 10 studios and 26 artists. Most of the artists are represented by a major gallery. Most of these artists are recognized for their signature work, award winning, best of show winners in their area of specialty. This is unique.

The resulting body of work these artists bring together is incredibly diverse. This is intentional. The work is high quality, often awe inspiring. The work on exhibit is new work, with a fresh face, with work from new guest artists. For a smaller sized tour, this is quite unique.

This HSAT is much like attending an exhibit at a Contemporary Museum of Wisconsin art. But there is a difference. The admission is free and all the work is for sale. In addition, the seven studios are exemplars of “working studios.” It is here in the studio that the art is created. Each kind of art requires a different kind of studio. Take a good look around. See the tools and supplies of the specific media involved. Be careful not to miss details below the threshold of that casual glance. Do you see possible influences on

the artist? Do you see items or pictures that may have provided inspiration? Do you see special tools that suggest alternative techniques?

There is more. The artists are here to meet you and to talk about the work. They are on their best behavior so you can ask them questions about their art and expect an answer. Any question is fine. Ask about the making of a piece, the techniques used, the use of materials, specific working conditions the artist desires. You can ask about inspiration or how the path of the work has changed over time. This is a hidden story just waiting to be told. Your 'interest' is all it takes to bring the story out. So begin the dialogue between you, the artist, and the work. The art work is desperately seeking an inquisitive audience. I have had clients tell me that a piece of work can become so much richer after meeting the artist and learning what transpired in the work's development. This understanding is a piece of provenance that colors how we see and think about the work. This dialogue is importantly unique.

And there is more. There are riches to be found in the studio locations where the artists (hosts) live and work. In some cases it can be location. Some of us are hidden for a reason. There is more to be learned about the art and artist by looking closely at the home and studio they have constructed within which to create their work, and to live their lives. And the gardens. The yards and gardens are a work unto themselves. Creativity doesn't stop at the studio door.

All of the above is available to you during the three days in early October when the studios are open to the public. We are 'hidden' on the back roads of East Central Wisconsin. The blush of Fall will embellish the drive.

This is what makes the Hidden Studios Art Tour such a unique experience. Come and see for yourself. Enjoy the HSAT Art Destination and those other hidden qualities you can find just beneath the surface.