



“Potters of the world ignite,” reads a bumper sticker in the parking lot of As if Studios in Grass Valley. Inside, ceramics is being taught to groups ranging from school children to octogenarians.

Further down the hall, sculptors and painters work on their pieces. At the center of this inspiring hubbub of creativity is a gallery that showcases their work.

Welcome to As if Studios, whose mission is to be a go-to visual arts center for the region — both as a gallery and studio. “We want to become a conduit for all the talent that’s here,” says Studio Director Amanda Paoletti.

Now in its third year, As if is well on its way.

The arts center began as a studio, renting out space to artists. But Amanda, a talented sculptor, led the effort to open a gallery as well, to promote the artists’ work. She calls it a perfect “symbiotic relationship.”

The plan worked. People are coming from all over to see and buy the local, original art — among the best in the Foothills. More than 250 people showed up for a holiday show, selling more than 120 pieces of the artists’ works.

An innovative “21 Buddhas” show is being held this spring, featuring original face castings of Buddha by 21 artists. “A collaborative effort between painter and sculptor — 21 visions, through a single powerful icon,” is the theme.

As if is now home to more than 20 artists with year-round open studios. Classes are taught in painting, drawing, ceramics, printmaking and mosaic arts. The gallery and arts center is open Monday – Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Saturday 11 a.m.-4 p.m. and Sunday by appointment.

As if Studios  
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