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## **Begalka: Raue arts committee honors oil painter and photographer**

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**Raue** Center for the **Arts**, 26 N. Williams St. in Crystal Lake, began another **art** exhibition season this week. And this time "**art**" means exactly that. The **Raue Visual Arts Committee** judges work each summer, in preparation for the fall season. It consists of artists, gallery owners, **art** teachers and collectors, member Jane Franz said. Each show lasts six to eight weeks and features two artists - one in each gallery. First up are **oil painter** Frankie Johnson of Lake Zurich and photographer Nancy Howe of Elgin.

Johnson, who studied **art** and design at the **Art** Institute of Chicago and Harper College, has more than 30 years of experience in **oil** painting and pastels. She has been teaching **art** 22 years - the last 13 at the Mainstreet **Art** Centre in Lake Zurich, which she started with a partner. It offers classes in various levels of drawing, **oil**, pastel and watercolor painting to all ages of students.

"It's great sharing with people who want to learn. There is a lot of enthusiasm and introspection that goes on," Johnson said. "I love the creative sense that you have to get into. It forces you to learn how to be interpretive of subjects and there are new challenges with it all the time. You never stop learning."

Johnson, who has been painting since she was 10, focuses on portraits, still-lives and landscapes. But she is not fussy about subjects. A bigger problem is finding places to show her work. Because Chicago galleries lead toward contemporary styles, she said, many local artists are forced to ship their work to Wisconsin or beyond.

That is why she is particularly grateful for an opportunity to show her work at the **Raue**. The exhibit runs through Dec. 6.

Howe, a 49-year-old New York transplant, has been shooting

professionally for 11 years - sparked by fine **arts** photography classes at Elgin Community College.

She graduated from a Kodak Instamatic as a kid to a 35-milimeter digital camera today. With the use of Adobe Photoshop, she likes to combine images - particularly architectural and organic forms - into photo montages. The interplay between light and shadow is what really trips her shutter.

"I can't draw a straight line without using a ruler. I can't draw a circle without using a cereal bowl," Howe said. "But I am able to convey images through the viewfinder. I've been in Women's Works (in Woodstock) and **Art** in the Barn in Barrington, which are juried **art** shows. I'd like to be famous, but I'm not there yet."

Her show at the **Raue**, through Dec. 9, should help.

Franz is glad to count Johnson and Howe among the 50 artists who have exhibited there the past four years. "Every year I think there can't be any more artists of this quality, and this year we were blown away," she said.

- More than 50 artists are participating in a holiday **art** show Saturday through Jan. 7 at the Old Court House **Arts** Center, 101 N. Johnson St. on the Woodstock Square. The show features paintings, prints, sculpture, jewelry, pottery, cards and ornaments. A gala opening, featuring some of the artists is at 7 p.m. Saturday. Gallery hours are 11 am. to 5 p.m. Thursday through Saturday; 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday. For information, call (815) 338-4525.

- Just in time for Thanksgiving, the Jailhouse Potters Gallery and School presents "At Your Service." Nine potters from northern Illinois and Wisconsin will exhibit pottery used to serve and display food.

Meet the artists during an opening reception

1 to 4 p.m. Sunday at the gallery, 103 N. Johnson St., just north of the Old Court House **Arts** Center. For information, call (815) 337-9487.

- Kimball & Bean Architectural and Garden Antiques, 3606 S. Country Club Road in Ridgfield, presents its sixth annual holiday open house next weekend. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Nov. 24, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Nov. 25 and noon to 5 p.m. Nov. 26. Peruse an amalgamation of antiques, handmade wreaths, vintage and handmade holiday decorations and fresh trimmings.

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