

Publish Date: 8/22/2007

## Fresh approach

Plein air artists from across U.S. will share skills with visitors to Estes Park event

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*The Daily Reporter-Herald*

Artists are taking to the streets of Estes Park as Paint Our Town brings painters out of the studio and on to the Riverwalk.

The Thursday event is part of the two-month-long Estes Park Plein Air Annual International Painting Competition and Show, which, in its sixth year, gathers artists from across the nation to depict the Rocky Mountains and surrounding areas “en plein air” — the French term for “outdoor in the open air.”

And Paint Our Town lets the public get an up-close view of the unroofed style of art.

“The event is designed to make artists accessible,” said Lynda Vogel, executive director at the Cultural Arts Council of Estes Park. “It’s a great opportunity for the public to learn about outdoor painting.”

Starting at 9 a.m., the Riverwalk and downtown will be scattered with at least 50 plein air painters who will capture a day in the life of Estes Park on their canvases.

Loveland’s Eileen Van Baren will be one of the artists painting on location.

“(Estes Park) is excellent for artists,” she said. “There are so many inspirational views they can draw from.”

Like many participating painters, Van Baren has been plein air painting around Estes Park since the events began on Aug. 4.

She said Paint Our Town will be a great event for families to see what the style is all about. “Anyone interested in art can come up and enjoy artists painting.”

Along with Paint Our Town, Plein Air Painters of Estes Park also will host the Quick Draw and Auction on Saturday, during which artists will have 90 minutes to paint live models. The event will take place in the Riverside Plaza — behind the shops at the southwest corner of Elkhorn Avenue and Riverside Drive — at 8:30 a.m. and will be followed by live auction of the fresh art.



Eileen Van Baren, left, of Loveland and Bob Salo of Milliken practice their art, a painting style called plein air, Wednesday in Rocky Mountain National Park. The French term, made popular by artists like Pissaro, Renoir and Monet, refers to artists working outside in open air. Artists will take to the streets of Estes Park on Thursday for the Paint Our Town event to make art and artists accessible to the public. **Reporter-Herald/Christopher Stark**