

# Art is a medium of generosity

By Robert Schimmel

The art of generosity. Is there such an art? You decide because to me this art form, that comes entirely from the heart and out of service can't be displayed in any tangible way other than through its effect on others lives.

What or who first comes to your mind when you think about or hear the word "generosity"? My guess is some kind of philanthropic organization or exceptional individual. That's certainly the case for me, though recently I was reminded how many artists are by nature generous and often to a near fault. Take my recent reunion with David Lemon, a nationally known and respected Western sculptor who has been doing museum quality bronzes for many years yet lives on a shoestring (or Indian feather) most of the time. He just had a show in August of bronzes and in-process clay images at the James Harold Galleries in the Boatworks Mall in Tahoe City during which he sculpted clay daily and interacted with patrons, children and general visitors.



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Lemon and I have known each other for 15-plus years, and he has always been gentle-hearted and giving, yet I was particularly touched when he gave one of his unique sculpting tools to the appreciative parent of a budding young artist.

The good news is Lemon is not an anomaly and that a dominant

percentage of artists are more than happy to share whatever they have or create. Why?

We all have creativity, but the true and humble artist lives and breathes to grow and express it, and one of the manifestations of that gift and its use is the profound understanding that giving and sharing are part of the package. So, having that personal connection with an artist is just one good reason to attend gallery exhibits, outdoor shows, studio tours and any other venues where artists are featured, not just the art. We shouldn't be looking for freebies, but rather supporting the artists and experiencing the magic of those who go out of their way as both a job and a passion to earn a living while giving tirelessly of their time and talents to educate and motivate any audience.

Arts organizations are also a wonderful example, especially the nonprofit variety, and loaded with people who may not be artists but know all about and exhibit the fine art of generosity. They're called volunteers. You may be one (artist or not) and therefore responsible for entertaining, educating and enriching people's lives while providing funding for a myriad of causes, events, etc. Thank you, from the fullness of my too often presumptive and forgetful heart.

Wonderful examples of such organizations or groups abound in Tahoe, so I will only name a few, specifically for our kids and youth who need it most: Tahoe Arts Project, Arts for the Schools, BATS (Bringing Art to The Schools), Tahoe Youth Ballet, and the Sphere of Influence.

Taking these few individual and group examples out of generosity's densely populated barrel in Tahoe recalls to me an oft heard comment, "There's nothing to do here; sure wish I lived (wherever)." To which I might wryly say, "Move," if the person is lucky. However, perception is reality to most, so we must look further into and discover all the treasures of generosity available and thus expand our worlds of

appreciation as well as support. Only then can one feel the effects of this art form and risk knowing that you, too, are capable of having the “heart” of generosity.

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