

3rd Sunday at Whiting Mills

By J. Timothy Quirk

If Tina Puckett has her way, Winsted will become an essential destination every third Sunday in Connecticut. As creator and sole proprietor of Tina's Baskets at Whiting Mills she is helping to lead the community of unique artists, photographers and business owners in branding the "3rd Sunday" as the perfect time to visit, explore and enjoy Winsted's burgeoning cultural scene. This past Sunday, September 20th, Whiting Mills hosted their inaugural "3rd Sunday" event for an appreciative and enthusiastic audience.

The concept for "3rd Sunday" stemmed from the highly successful biannual "Open Studio Tours" at this former factory building. The "3rd Sunday" initiative provides greater opportunities for the public to learn more about the extraordinary work being created in Winsted. This Sunday there were presentations scheduled every half hour so that visitors could tour the location and learn something new at scheduled stops. The festivities began at 11am when a "Wool from Sheep to Shawl" discussion was held by Mary Watt of the Quilted Ewe. This was followed by lectures on collecting antique books by Robert Seymour and collecting rail road models by Roger Moreau. Debra Lill taught photo-shop art and Viki Hancock explained Pit Fire Pottery. There was painting with bee's wax by Gay Schempp followed by a demonstration by Kim Elovirta of Ravens Edge on soap making. Heather Neilson, an artist whose work will be showcased next month at The Underground Gallery in Collinsville, provided a mix media presentation. To conclude the day, Jean Kent explained how gourd art is created and Tina Puckett provided a discussion on basket weaving.

As an added bonus for this third Sunday, portrait artist Debbie Hennes enlisted the aid of a live model to pose for a "Life Drawing" event from 1-4pm and the public was invited to create their own art from the experience. "Aside from doing commissioned portraits, I like to work from life," says Hennes. "And I thought 'Wouldn't it be great to invite people to come in to come sketch from the live model whether they want to come for an hour or the whole time, or even five minutes, even just to watch.'" Hennes is hoping to form a sketch group that can meet and share the cost of hiring a live model.

Model Carla Lindsey was poised, patient and professional and enjoyed the event in Winsted immensely. A model with ten years of experience, Lindsey is a “plein aire” landscape artist herself so she loved the prospect of interacting with other artists in this forum.

The “3rd Sunday” at Whiting Mills has great appeal for the fans of the artists within the complex but the idea has great potential to increase Winsted’s notoriety as the scope of the initiative increases. Rose Mari Roast of Walk in the Woods states, “3rd Sundays at Whiting Mills is such a wonderful, collaborative opportunity for the tenants as well as - and more importantly - the community that supports us,” says Roast. “I feel this monthly event will nurture some great momentum and energy for everyone who participates in any way!”

Tina Puckett’s vision is to welcome other Winsted businesses and restaurants into the fold and allow the 3rd Sunday concept to build throughout the city. “This is starting to evolve,” says Puckett. During the next “3rd Sunday” in October, Whiting Mills will feature a children’s costume contest where children will be invited to “trick or treat” throughout the Whiting Mills complex. Bekah Photography will take photos and the child with the winning costume will receive a free photoshoot.

For more information about Whiting Mills <http://whitingmills.com/>

For more information about Carla Lindsey <http://carlaspiritualart.webs.com/>