

Arts in Mind

Enjoy Summer's Long Days of Creativity

By Suz Lipman

Summer is here, and what better way to enjoy the longer days and, perhaps, more relaxed schedules than by making or doing something creative? Luckily for us, Mill Valley teems with opportunities for the do-it-yourself artist. No matter what your age or your children's ages, you can find a light-filled studio, a craft table, art supplies, teachers, inspiration, and whatever else you need to explore, experiment, and have fun with art, all without leaving your town. Here are some of our local resources for making all kinds of art:

Ambatalia Fabrics

1 El Paseo

388-6278

www.ambataliafabrics.com

In addition to its selection of natural, sustainable fabrics, wool, lace, ribbon, buttons, and more from around the world, Ambatalia offers sewing-machine time, as well as the boundless energy of proprietress Molly DeVries, who is passionate about the link between community and creativity. Lately both have been happening in the store itself, as Molly and others have been preparing a line of handmade fabric items, Ambatalia Making Happy, which will be available in the new Tyler Florence cookware store at 59 Throckmorton. Ambatalia also has workshops in felting, sewing, pillows, altered books, and more. Call, or visit the store or web site for more information.

Art Start

45 Camino Alto, Suite 108

388-8336

www.artstart-marin.com

One-year-old Art Start features drop-in and drop-off art time for children primarily ages 3-6 in its colorful space. For \$18 a visit, or \$80 for 5 visits, children can make the Craft of the Week; two crafts from a changing array of choices such as glittery masks, jeweled crowns, and clay and pipe cleaner animals; and enjoy unlimited painting, pasting, coloring, beading, and more from the supplies that are atop the low table. Store owner Susie Ames often paints with the children and provides other inspiration. Art Start is also available for parties. Call for hours and more information.

Beads of Marin

8 Locust Avenue

381-4364

www.beadsofmarin.com

Beads of Marin has occupied a former bar since 1994. There you'll find a colorful array of beads of all types from around the world and other beading supplies. There are lots of spaces to get comfortable and create, and the staff members are more than happy to help with ideas and techniques. Beads of Marin also offers one-time and ongoing classes for ages 14 and up in beading, wirework, redesigning your jewelry, and more. All materials and tools are provided. Call or visit the store for current class listings and prices, or to get inspired.

Mill Valley Art & Paper
475 Miller Avenue
388-5642
<http://web.mac.com/mvap/iWeb/MVAP/Home.html>

In its relatively new, large space, Mill Valley Art & Paper has a wonderful selection of art supplies for adults and children. You'll find many types of paint, brushes, chalk, clay, canvases, and lots of art and specialty papers. The store's classes are primarily aimed at "tweens" ages 7-11, because, according to Steve Black, who teaches comic book drawing, that age tends not to have as many local art classes to choose from. The store is offering a "season sampler" of classes Tues.-Fri., July 8-11, during which a different artist will teach in a different medium each day. Classes will include drawing and painting, pastels, crafts, and comics. The 4-day sampler costs \$135. A catalog of other classes will be available mid-July, in the store and on the web site. The store hosts birthday parties as well.

Mill Valley Public Library
375 Throckmorton Avenue
389-4292
www.millvalleylibrary.org

We have an amazing treasure and resource in our local library. As in summers past, the library is hosting free hands-on art workshops for children, in addition to its many other programs. The program, "Make Something of Yourself!" features a different workshop every Thursday at 3:30 p.m., from June 26 – August 7. Story Poles, Pop Art, Book Arts, Portraits, and stuffed "Ugly Pets" are just some of the events in the line-up. Visit the Mill Valley Library's Children's Room for more information, or go to the Kids Event Calendar on the library web site, which can be found at:
<http://www.millvalleylibrary.org/Index.aspx?page=485&recordid=3619>.

SNAP! Photography Club will also be meeting at the library Wednesdays at 4:45 p.m., from June 25 – August 6. The club, which is for all ages, will explore the art of photography through discussion and shooting. More information is available through the library web site, which links to SNAP!'s own blog, <http://snapmillvalley.blogspot.com/>.

The O'Hanlon Center
616 Throckmorton Avenue
388-4331

www.ohanloncenter.org

This special non-profit art center has been attracting creative people since 1969, when it was called Sight & Insight. It offers visual, performance and literary art workshops, classes, and events for children and adults in forms that include printing, photography, collage, poetry, prose, theater, movement, and ceramics. Call the center or see the web site for more information, or attend the annual Summer Solstice party Saturday, June 21, 3-5 p.m. and get a taste of the center's art, along with music and food. Admission to the party is free.

Paint Paper Scissors

10 Locust Avenue

383-8777

www.paintpaperscissors.com

This fairly new store bills itself as a One Stop Creativity Shop, and you can't help but feel creative when you visit. There are shelves chocked full of art and craft kits, supplies, unpainted wooden items, and creative toys, as well as a big table where kids ages 2 and up can drop in with a parent to make a project such as a mirror, a picture frame, or a decorated apron. All materials and instructions are provided. 45-minute sessions are \$6.50 each, or \$55 for 10 visits and include unlimited paint and paper in addition to a choice from the weekly projects. Paint Paper Scissors also offers children's art classes and party space and supplies. Call or visit the store for more information.

The Planet

220 Redwood Highway

331-8373

http://kidsheadquarters.org/planet_main.htm

You may have noticed the colorful Planet building, along the bike path, by the Seaplane airport. At 13 years strong, this unique center offers art and play on a drop-in basis, for ages 6 to adult. The center features a great wood shop and instruction, beaded-jewelry making, and opportunities to create fabric projects such as pillows, dolls, doll clothes and stuffed creatures. Drop-in rates are \$12 per hour, with various discount rates available for advance payment. Call The Planet for hours and availability, or stop in and see the child- and teacher-led creativity and play.

Roco Dance and Fitness

237 Shoreline Highway

388-6786

www.rocodance.com

You don't have to be a kid to try a dance class at Roco, which features drop-in dance classes at all levels, for all ages. Classes for children and adults include ballet, modern, jazz, Afro Brazilian, hip hop, and more. In a beginning class, moves are broken down so participants can dance with ease and expression. Adult classes are \$16 per single class or

\$130 for 10 classes. Children's classes have various tuition rates and there are lots of offerings for summer. Call, or visit the web site or the studio for more information.

“Arts in Mind” is a series from Kiddo! that explores arts and arts education. Suz Lipman is a writer and a parent in the Mill Valley School District.