

By SASHA PAULSEN  
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## **Art in the Gardens**



**This painting by Randall Sexton, voted the Artists' Choice winner, will be on display at the first Napa Valley Art Festival this Saturday in the South Gardens of Copia.**

### **The first Napa Valley Art Festival happens Saturday**

The Napa Valley Art Festival, designed to “celebrate representational art at its finest,” will be launched Saturday at Copia. The inaugural event brings together more than 300 paintings by 43 West Coast artists. Admission is free to the event, which runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and includes food and wine for sale and live music as well as an art show from the best in the west

The festival is the brainchild of Bob Pallas, who also coordinated the art show and sale at the Feast of Eden fundraiser for Land Trust of Napa County. Proceeds from this new festival will benefit the Land Trust’s Connolly Ranch Education Center in Napa.

Pallas said the success of the art sales — the net profit was \$22,000 — “gave me the confidence that we were on to something.”



“Stewart Ranch,” by Kevin Courter is among the works created by 42 artists for the show and sale. |

“Leadership Napa Valley did a feasibility study to see if Napa could support an art festival. They presented it to a group of nonprofits and said go ahead. They said it’s going to take a lot of work and you probably won’t be able to pull it off till 2009. I took the ball and ran with it.”

Pallas said he’s patterning the event after the Sonoma Plein Air festival, “rather than the Sausalito Festival, where you have to pay to get in and artists’ have to pay a huge amount for a booth,” he said. “I’m limiting it to representational art — no abstracts, no jewelry.”

His call for artists drew responses from all over the country, “from Hawaii to Massachusetts.” The top 42 were selected for exhibit and sale at the festival by a jury made up of Jean Stern, executive director of the Irvine Museum, Peter Trippi, editor of Fine Art Connoisseur magazine, and artist Kevin Macpherson.

“I tried to bring in the best from all over the country,” Pallas said.

Among the participating artists are Kevin Couter, who won the Jurors’ Choice, and Randall Sexton, the Artists’ Choice winner. Another participating artist is Christine Pallas, Bob Pallas’ wife.

“We took all the names off the paintings,” Pallas said proudly. “And she came in ninth.”

Pallas said he and his wife met at an ad agency in 1978 and went on to launch their own business together. “She was the creative side and I was the business side. When we moved to Napa, I wound the business down and she had the chance to pursue her art.”

Pallas meanwhile went to work for the Land Trust. “I knew it was going to be work I’d love.”

The Silverado Brewing Company will be selling sandwiches and other foods at the festival, and

Three Twins Ice Cream will be selling its popular organic treats. Honig Winery will be on hand to sell wine. JB duo, Passin' Through and the Mean Time Play Boys will provide the entertainment.

For more information including the complete list of artists, visit [www.NapaValleyArtFestival.com](http://www.NapaValleyArtFestival.com)

**The Napa Valley Art Festival**

Saturday, May 31, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Copia South Gardens

Free admission.

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