

# THE ART STUDIO INC.

Promoting Art & Culture in Southeast Texas

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## Collaborative, Creative

### 'Party-cipation' teams TASI, Stark Museum for DIY arts event



*Amanda Hamilton Burkhart, left, Terri Fox and Annmarie Ventura practice for "Party-cipation," a free DIY arts event set for Feb. 4.*

If you've ever dreamed of having your artwork hang in an honest-to-goodness gallery, now's the time for your dream to come true.

Beaumont's The Art Studio, Inc., in collaboration with art educators from the Stark Museum of Art in Orange, will host "Party-cipation 2.0," a free do-it-yourself art event, Feb. 4. Party-cipants will create work that will form The Studio's gallery exhibition for February with a reception to be held 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. that evening.

"Have fun, make art, stick it on the wall," organizer Terri Fox, Stark Museum exhibition designer and manager and a Studio member for 25 years, said. "Write a word, a line, write a story about your work, about the work you experience. Stick your writing on the wall so that others can enjoy your interpretation."

There will be tons of recycled, repurposed supplies for people to choose as their medium.

"The point is to bring the community of Southeast Texas together to play, exchange ideas, express themselves and enjoy the creative moment," Fox said. "All it takes is an idea and a will to create."

Annmarie Ventura, Stark Museum studio outreach educator, said "Party-cipation" is all about creative fun.

"If you're there, you're completely involved," she said. "From the creation of the art, to the way it's displayed, to the text that lives beside it, this exhibition allows artists to control the space together. The fun is in the making, but also in exploring the avenues of conversation that emerge between the work as the exhibition develops, shifts, and makes itself new with every new artist who contributes."

The event is a sequel to an event held in 2012, which attracted a large crowd, Fox said.

"The big difference this year is we are bringing in the art educators from the Stark Museum of Art because it's important to collaborate with other institutions," she said. "They need to know our members and our members need to know them — and Orange isn't that far."

While doing research in Washington D.C. recently, Fox said she became involved in a conversation about bringing groups together, and she thought about how the two different organizations could come together.

"One group is contemporary art and one is historical art, and sometime the audiences don't cross



over,” she said. “I think it’s really important for the people in Orange to see our art educators working with a bigger Southeast Texas community, and I also think it’s important to see The Art Studio — just bringing everyone together in an environment that’s creative and open.

“We can’t get as messy at the museum as I’d like to see sometimes.”

Participants will be free to be as creative as they want, but Fox said she decided to give a little direction for this show by offering four themes on which people can reflect.

“One is ‘Love’ — people can make images, cut out words, do painting or whatever to fill one wall that is about love,” she said. “One wall will be about ‘Hate,’ one wall will be ‘Environment,’ and another will be ‘Community.’

“So those are just four words that start to create a dialogue with the audience and the participant. It just gives a little direction — not telling you what to do with that, it just gives a space to have your own dialogue with the rest of us.”

Fox, who graduated with a studio art degree from Lamar, said she wants participants, including visitor’s to the reception, to comment on other people’s works. Paper and notes will be provided to encourage the dialogue. People can even write poetry.

“I have often used a lot of words in my art pieces, so someone that doesn’t necessarily feel comfortable picking up scissors or glue or paintbrushes might feel more comfortable reflecting on a piece,” she said. “That’s part of the storytelling environment in creating the exhibit.”





The participants may want to write their feelings about the artwork in the show, whether they created it themselves or just what they see.

"I want to include collage work, where you can cut out words out of paper and stick them on the wall to go with the pieces or that you just want to stick on the wall," she said.

Participants during the day will also be able to vote on different aspects of the walls, and in the evening, the entryway will be a "people's Choice" wall.

Fox said that participants will receive name tags and when they are done at whatever level they choose to participate, they can put their nametags on the wall to create a piece of communal art that represents their participation in the event.

"They put their names on the wall, like these are the artists in the show — taking full credit right up front that they have work in the show," she said.

Visitors to the reception in the evening will also have the option to comment on the work.

"The people's choice will already be established and the walls filed, but I hope people will continue to comment on the work and Facebook it, Instagram, share it and take pictures of the work on the wall, that sort of thing," Fox said. "It's a really great opportunity to interact on a lot of different levels."

Fox said that everything will be recycled material or environmentally friendly material.

As well as the Stark Museum educators, Fox expects artists from The Studio and the community will be on hand, as well as printmaker Neal Pitak and members of Lamar University's Office of Sustainability.

"This event is all about art that is alive," Amanda Hamilton Burkhart, Stark Museum education intern, said. "You get to create and curate your own exhibit. You get to decide where and how your work will be displayed. It's a day to create, connect, and play."

Fox said she is interested in the philosophy of "Collaborative Impact."

"As an exhibit design professional, I interact with people across the United States on a regular basis, having these discussions about community involvement and how to bring the arts to the community in as many different ways as we can," she said. "I'm trying to get away from the idea of separation. The Golden Triangle is my home and I'm trying to create that arts environment. It's been my mission and my goal for 25 years."

"We're bigger together than we are separate."

The Art Studio is located at 720 Franklin in downtown Beaumont.

For more information, call 409-838-5393 or visit [www.artstudio.org](http://www.artstudio.org).

*Story and photos by Andy Coughlan, ISSUE editor*

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