

The Heritage Art Gallery at THM is pleased to welcome our upcoming show "Unchained Color" by Betty Berk. An opening reception for the show will be held on Thursday, October 18th from 5:00-7:00pm.

Betty Berk, Expressionist painter, uses bright color to paint landscapes, animals, and still life subjects. Her paintings reflect her deep appreciation of nature. The world is full of life and movement, which she captures in her landscapes and florals. Betty explains that her paintings are better understood if experienced as a visual poem.

Six years ago, Berk began taking piano lessons, which has become a great passion of hers. The expressive nature of playing the piano, taught by her piano teacher, John Kitterman of Hamilton Piano Studios, has carried over and influenced her paintings.

"Unchained Color" is the first project collaboration by Berk and Kitterman shown for the first time here at the Heritage Art Gallery. Kitterman is a composer when he's not teaching his piano students. Both Berk and Kitterman created works in their own medium, using the same subject matter, "The River." Berk explains, "the music John was writing pushed me to experiment to capture the drama of John's song in my paintings. This was a real challenge." This lovely piano piece will be playing as the show's soundtrack in the Gallery. Berk's specific paintings expressing this music will be labeled as such.

Berk taught high school art full time for over twenty years. She found the high school students to be very inspirational. "I have had many students who were troubled and unable to express themselves, have a life changing experience by learning to express themselves in my classroom through art." explains Berk. She now teaches one on one private lessons, tailoring her lessons to suit each student while expanding their artistic skills.

Betty Berk's work has been exhibited at Café 225 with several one-woman shows, as well as at Arts Visalia, several store fronts throughout Visalia, Fresno City Hall, Studio 74, Sorensen's Studio in Fresno, and the Courthouse Gallery in Exeter. Berk has also been a featured artist for Sierra Art Trails at Timberline Gallery in Oakhurst and at Taste the Arts in Visalia. She also shows her work in her own studio as part of the annual South Valley Studio Tour in Visalia. Berk was commissioned to provide the art for the offices of the Citrus Research Board located in Visalia, two of which have been featured on the cover of the Research Board's "Citrograph Magazine." For further information on Betty Berk's work, visit her website [www.bettyberk.com](http://www.bettyberk.com).

The reception is open to the public and free of charge. The show runs through December 29th. Hours of operation are 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Thursday - Saturday, and the 3rd Sunday (Sept-May) from 12:30-4:00 p.m. Admission to Heritage Art Gallery exhibitions are free.