



MEDIA RELEASE

Media Contact: Meg Osborne – 317-590-7522 - meg@megpromo.com

Carmel International Arts Festival, City officials partner to bring Italian, Latvian artists to Festival



The Carmel International Arts Festival is excited to host artists from two of Carmel's Sister Cities during this year's event, to be held September 24-25 in the Arts & Design District.

The VanRiper-Woodard Family Foundation has agreed to sponsor this very special part of the festival that helps to tie in not only the art of other cities and countries, but the values and cultures, as well.

The City of Carmel recently announced two new Sister Cities relationships with Jelgava, Latvia, and Cortona, Italy. Previous agreements are already in place with Kawachinagano, Osaka, Japan and Xiangyang, Hubei, China.

The Carmel International Arts Festival shares with the City of Carmel the mission of sharing the art and creativity of artists from two of these cities

with visitors to this year's festival as a way to promote diversity of artistic expression and multi-cultural understanding.

"CIAF is excited to have the sister cities join us for the weekend to share their history, culture, and rich art heritage," said Jill Gilmer, president of the Carmel International Arts Festival Board of Directors. "I have met the artists and believe the city and festival spectators will love having them be a part of our Festival."

Carmel Mayor Jim Brainard recommended that the Festival host the artists.

"During my time in Italy, while finalizing our Sister Cities relationship with Cortona, I was able to experience first-hand the art and culture of this region. I have also come to learn more about the art and culture of Latvia. I look forward to our residents and visitors having the chance to share in the experience as part of the cultural exchange of our new relationship. I appreciate the work that has been done by the Festival board to make this happen so quickly," said Mayor Brainard.

THE ARTISTS



Sebastian DelBrenna, from Cortona, Italy, is an artist who works with jewelry. Building on his family's history of jewelry and chain design, DelBrenna created his own collection using gemstones, Italian coins and sculptural elements. His goal is to be a jeweler who "not only celebrates jewelry and Italy's rich traditions, but one that also stirs a deep sense of connection," according to his website.

[Click here to learn more about DelBrenna.](#)

Cortona is a beautiful, historic city in the Tuscany area of Italy that enjoys landscapes of low mountains and lakes. It is known in the area as a city that appreciates the art of fine food and fine wines, in addition to beautiful art.



Ilze-Emse Grinberga from Jelgava, Latvia, is an artist and sculptor who works in many different forms but is known for her "Chamotte Sculptures" which adorn a special garden by the river in her home of Jelgava. These sculptures are actually unveiled while still on the kiln with the fire going, and then are placed permanently in the garden.

Grinberga has a Master of Humanities in Art. She has had solo exhibitions in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Sweden and Finland among others. Other than her works along the river, her works appear in public spaces at the Jelgava University Forestry Faculty, Jelgava Post Island, and Abgunste Manor.



While she cannot bring these sculptures with her, Grinberga will bring large photo posters to share her incredible work. In addition, she will bring smaller pieces of her porcelain meant for Christmas tree ornaments and will bring items from MIL DESIGN and leather works made by her sister-in-law, leather artist Ilizan Grinberga. These items will ensure visitors get a feeling of the Latvian culture. You can see more of her work at www.facebook.com/ilze.emsegrinberga.

After discussion with the Mayor, the CIAF Board fully embraced the idea and is making booth space available for both artists. This will undoubtedly be a highlight of the Festival and something our community and visitors will enjoy.

The project is being made possible by the VanRiper-Woodard Family Foundation's contribution toward this Sister City program portion of the festival.

"It gives me and my family great joy to support the Carmel arts community, especially the initiative to bring two international artists in to display at this year's festival," said Turner Woodard.

"Our family has had strong ties to the local arts community, dating back many years to when my stepfather, Guernsey VanRiper, displayed his works in Carmel. The VanRiper-Woodard Family Foundation is honored to carry on this legacy."

The Carmel International Arts Festival will take place Saturday, September 24, from 11 am to 7 pm and Sunday, September 25, from 11 am to 5 pm. The location is at Main Street and Rangeline Road in Carmel.

For more information on the Festival, [click here](#).