

Written by Tyler Hollis

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2nd Annual Prescott Plein Air Art Festival Celebrates Area's Natural Beauty

Attendees of this free, open-to-the-public event will be able to observe local artists painting outdoors as they capture the spirit and essence of Prescott's scenery.

The Highlands Center for Natural History and the City of Prescott are proud to present the 2nd Annual Prescott Plein Air Art Festival, taking place October 21-24, 2021 at scenic locations throughout Prescott. This special event will feature 16 renowned Arizona artists who have been invited to create art in outdoor settings, with a focus on highlighting the area's diverse natural landscapes, historical and architectural beauty. Paintings finished within the three-day period will be displayed at a ticketed reception held on Sunday, October 24 from 2-6 p.m. at The Finn Restaurant at Touchmark at the Ranch, where the public will be able to view, purchase and judge the works for a People's Choice Award.

Referencing the French expression for "in the open air," plein air art festivals showcase artists who paint outdoors and strive to capture the spirit and essence of a landscape or subject by incorporating natural light, color and movement into their work. Artists participating in the Prescott Plein Air Art Festival may be found painting anywhere throughout the Prescott area, but the public is invited to observe and engage with them at no cost as they create their art at specific accessible sites, such as the Constellation Trailhead, Goldwater Lake and the Watson Lake Gazebo.

While the Festival will officially begin on October 21, preceding events will allow the public to delve into the world of plein air painting. The "Artists in the Gardens" series will be held on Sundays from late August through early October, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Highlands Center. These free and open-to-the-public programs will allow attendees to watch plein air painting in process, learn about the history of this style of painting around the world, and view some of the previous works of the featured artist, which will be available for sale.

As a regional hub for lifelong learning through outdoor education since 1996, the Highlands Center is a science-based, nonprofit organization that strives to help children and adults discover the wonders of nature and become wise caretakers of the land. Operating on an 80-acre campus near Lynx Lake through a Special Use Permit with Prescott National Forest, the Center aims to nurture a meaningful sense of place and foster an appreciation for and knowledge of the Central Arizona Highlands.

The development of both onsite and offsite outdoor education programs and partnerships provides opportunities for the local community to understand the connections between humanity and the natural world, inspiring all to live in a respectful and sustainable way.

To learn more about the Center and the Prescott Plein Air Art Festival,

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visit <https://highlandscenter.org/prescott-plein-air/>.