

By Rebecca Stone

For the TODAY

It's hard to miss as you approach Lincoln City from the south. The Freed Gallery's surrounding landscape, dotted with Lyman Whitaker's mesmerizing, swirling wind sculptures, really put on a show. But what's inside the Freed will certainly take your breath away. The work of 100 resident artists — many from the Pacific Northwest — which ranges from jewelry and painting to sculpture and furniture, grace its interior real estate.

"We have everything," says gallery owner Lee Freed matter-of-factly.

But starting this weekend, the gallery's cadre of artists will swell for the month of August. Five artists from Southern California, will comprise a show entitled, "Californians.... Here They Come!" It's a lighthearted jab at the sense of invasion some Oregonians have at times felt at the hands of their southerly neighbors. But when it comes to this particular type of invasion, who could feel anything but delight?

Gallery visitors will be treated to a range of work from the California artists such as Russell Jacques, an internationally recognized metal sculptor and painter, who splits his time between Newport Beach, California and the Oregon Coast. Working with materials that include oil, acrylic, ink, pencil, charcoal and crayon, Jacques says he often achieves unexpected but positive results, and believes that "mistake making" is the key to originality.

"My daily routine is like a dandelion in a windy field," he said. "My creative spores can go in any direction at any time — I just follow my thoughts and start something."

For former commercial photographer Don Saxton, artistic vision is expressed through the lens of a camera.

"My studio is anywhere I find the right light for the subject," he said.

But, he adds that the final creation of the image happens in his California office, where he collaborates with professional printers to commit his abstract images, via heat transfer, to mediums such as specially coated aluminum.

"I often refer to the process as an infused metal print because it's not a print that is mounted onto the surface, but actually transferred into the metal's surface," he said, adding that the result is a hard, scratch-resistant, waterproof surface with ultra-high color definition.

Charlie Lieberman's love of photography led him to Hollywood, where he became an award-winning cinematographer and a director of photography for television and film. But his love of still photography never left him. His haunting images are layered with mood, and many of his recent photos depict scenery that will be recognizable to locals.

"I'm trying to bring attention to moments where the place, the weather and the details align, seemingly by magic," he said. "Sometimes it's about nature, pure and raw, and sometimes it's about man's place in this world."

Palm Desert-based artist Marcy Gregory has enjoyed finding things to make sculptures for 25 years. In fact, her assemblage art can leave you with a desire to see what she will come up with next from her stockpile of wood pieces, cardboard and Styrofoam. She notes that her pieces typically begin with a scrap in her studio that catches her eye, but that her pieces “take form over a few months until a pleasing composition emerges, which is lyrical and that encourages the eye to roam over the piece in its entirety.” She then lives with the piece for a few weeks to determine that it is truly finished.

Also of Palm Desert, painter and sculptor Ryan Campbell has been known for his vibrant street art that adorns walls throughout the cityscape of Southern California. But more recently, he is gaining traction in the art world for his hard-edge style, geometric abstractions manifested in bold lines, lights and darks, and color, created with markers, stencils and air-propelled paints. It’s a body of work he calls “Line Segments,” which also inhabits his sculptures. He says he draws inspiration from cast shadows and brilliant graffiti colors.

The show, which will open on Saturday, Aug. 5, with a reception from 2 to 5 pm, came together, according to Freed, via a string of acquaintances in Southern California.

“Originally, Russell knew Ryan, and Ryan knew Don, and Don knew Marcy,” she said. “And Charlie got to know them through me. I was down there for a long time, so I got to spend time with them, and we all became friends.”

A Chicago native, Freed moved to the Oregon Coast 21 years ago, opening the gallery out of a passion for the arts and with an eye toward supporting them in the schools as well as the community.

Freed predicts a high level of interest for the California show. And why not? If you crave a taste of Southern California, instead of a two-day slog down the I-5, you can get your fix for the art of the Golden State right here on the Oregon Coast.

### **If you go:**

What: “Californians.... Here They Come!”

Where: Freed Gallery, 6119 SW Hwy. 101, Lincoln City

When: Reception 2-5 pm, Saturday, Aug. 5. Show runs through Aug. 25

Call: 541-994-5600