



Redefining the CSA

When 10 Sonoma County artists wanted to effectively get their work out there, they chose a delivery system patrons already knew.

BY MICHAEL PERSSON



Turn your home into a different art gallery each month with the latest 428collective CSA piece, like these geometric paintings and sculpture by Victoria Wagner.

In Healdsburg, the CSA arrangement is well known between farmer and customer. Foggy River Farm offers it. So does Red Owl Farm. And Tierra Vegetables, too. But what folks are less acquainted with is 428collective's version. This group doesn't grow food, they make art...or, if you like, food for the soul. Stump up the seed money for a 428 artist, and instead of receiving carrots, you get a painting from Cristina Hobbs; in lieu of beans, Pat Lenz tempts with her mixed media.

"We were looking to start an art revolution," says Healdsburg's Jessica Martin, a member of the 10-person collective that came together in 2012, launching their CSA program a year later. "We hoped to create an identity of this place that isn't dictated by tourism." Their idea is that Healdsburg is a place that defines itself by what it does for itself. If outsiders want a slice, they're welcome – just pull up a chair. But you've got to have that chair to offer

(BOTH PHOTOS) SASHA CHEROENISUB

(Right) Painted sculptures by Carol Vena-Mondt utilize reclaimed Sonoma County oak, redwood, and fir; (below) for the CSA project, Jessica Martin created a special-edition series inspired by spring.



(SCULPTURE) CAITLIN MCCAFFREY; (PAINTING) QUINCEY IMHOFF

in the first place, which is where the CSA format came into play. Sure, the concept is nothing new, but a CSA of this kind? Well, it just had Healdsburg written all over it.

Subscribers sign up for 10 months and receive a new piece of art each month, all of which are originals. Each artist represents a month, which begins with a pick-up party at Martin's Healdsburg studio.

"It is really not your stereotypical wine country party," says Martin. "My studio is in an industrial lot, where only a couple trees grow. Guests wait outside in the car lot, we roll up the metal doors, and in they go to see what's in store." No picnic tables set in a sumptuous vineyard, no gourmand extravaganza – just art in a natural state to not detract from it. Depending on the artist's offering, subscribers either pick up their designated piece or choose one from the creative smorgasbord on display. Those who are from out of town receive their pieces by mail.

This CSA achieves the element of surprise much like that box of vegetables conventional supporters receive. The collaborative hopes to teach people to look at art in more expansive ways, less idiosyncratic to the tastes of the buyer. "It's a way art lovers can see the world around them," adds Martin. As of February 2014, there are 40 subscribers, paying \$600 for the privilege of getting art that is fresh but not edible, new but not organic, but that is in every way homegrown. **H**