



Black fin tuna, starfish and sea turtles are just some of the Keys' natural influences on our Art Box Artist of the Month, Monica Bankowski. Having visited and fished the Keys for over thirty years, this retired Ohio art teacher now happily winters in the Florida Keys.

"Being a gal from Michigan, I'm an outdoors person as well as and artist from childhood. So when my husband planned for us to retire to the Keys, I couldn't have been happier! I wasn't prepared for the joy of living here in this rich, artistic culture. The beauty of the Keys is inspiring and I find there's not enough hours in the day to work on my art!" she exclaims.

A jack of all trades, Monica Bankowski works in and can teach numerous

Art Box Artist of the Month:
Monica Bankowski



painting and drawing media, and has extensive experience with printmaking, ceramics, photography, computer graphics, stained and fused glass, and even calligraphy. "When I was teaching high school art, I had two art rooms, one for fine art and a lab for digital art. I taught traditional black and white photography with a darkroom, then gradually went digital with the use of Adobe Photoshop. I now use it everyday."

Monica shares her passion of Photoshop on Monday evenings at The Art Box. Her class is offered through the month of March every Monday night from 6-8 pm. It's geared for beginners but those with some experience can bring their questions and projects to class for some tips on how to get the most out of Photoshop tools, drop down menus, and the palettes and layers. The class will also touch on the aesthetics and



ethics of photo editing. Pre-registration is required.

As a teacher, Monica always believed that everyone is good at something. Although she left teaching in Ohio, here she continues to enjoy working with young people and has taught art at Coral Shores High School, substituted at PKS, KLS and TVM, and volunteered in the art department at Island Christian School. "I still believe in fun art and fine art, and art should be a fun experience based on solid art concepts. You can't teach art in the public school system for over 35 years without a sense of humor." One of her favorite quotes is from Albert Einstein: "Imagination is more important than knowledge."

Monica's artwork can also be seen at the Artamorado Gallery in the Rain Barrel. Her commissioned coconut paintings of client's pets and shoe painting designs are on display as



well as photographs, oil, acrylic and watercolor paintings, and artwork on tile.

Monica is an active member of the Art Guild of the Purple Isles of Key Largo, and attends Calvary Chapel; in Ohio she is a member of the Port Clinton Artists' Club and attends the Church of Middle Bass Island.

When not painting or teaching Monica enjoys boating and fishing with her husband Brad. In Ohio they are active members of the Middle Bass Island Yacht Club where she is volunteer photographer and co-editor of the MBIYC Member Directory/Yearbook.



"The work of a man's hands comes back to him." Prov. 12:14



Art Guild of the Purple Isles Annual Show
March 5th-15th

The annual show of the Art Guild of the Purple Isles is coming soon... and is not to be missed. Local member artists are busily preparing their works for show entry. Judging takes place prior to the opening day of the show, which runs March 5 through 15 daily from 10 am to 6 pm, at Key Largo Library, Tradewinds Shopping Plaza, MM 101.4 oceanside.

Wendy Cahill, a long time dedicated member of the Guild is shown here at a recent workshop taught by well-known artist Kathleen Denis. Kathleen has donated an original oil "Tropical Lane" to be raffled at the show along with a watercolor original by artist Tom Jones. Proceeds from the raffle are used to promote art



education and activities in local schools. Visitors may vote for their favorite entry which will receive the "People's Choice" award.



Water's Edge II" by Rosanne Grolman was the 2014 People's Choice winner.

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Sounds of the Keys



Soulcide at Gilbert's Resort.



Alan Truesdell every Tuesday at the Pilot House.



Rob Mitchell getting guitar lesson from blues legend JW Jones.



Blues great JW Jones rocks the house at Bayside Grille.



Shane Duncan Band - everyone's new favorite - at Gilbert's Resort.



Sauce Boss Bill Wharton gets high (up on the bar) and entertains at Gilbert's.