

NC Arts Incubator

A place for artists to grow in their art skills and develop their art business

By Sue Ulrich

The NC Arts Incubator is a non-profit organization that began in 2001 as the idea of three men who saw potential for revitalizing downtown Siler City and bringing Chatham County artists together. The combination of artists needing affordable studio space, empty buildings downtown and the CCCC Small Business program came together. The NC Arts Incubator (NCAI) was incorporated in 2002.

The mission of NCAI is to provide a place where artists can rent low-cost studio space, develop business marketing skills, share ideas with other artists, work on gallery pricing and display and move on to independent business ownership. Over the past nine years, the Incubator has changed a lot, but the mission remains the same.

At least six of the artists have left to open their own, independent studios and shops in Siler City and several more have moved here because they were drawn by the art community. The bumpy parking lot on the corner of Chatham Ave. and 2nd Street is now a beautiful courtyard with the Rotary Club stage, where live music can be heard on 3rd Fridays from March – October and where many, many special town events have taken place. Courtyard Coffee, a privately owned business, opened in the Incubator a couple of years ago and is a busy gathering place to catch up with friends while having a great cup of coffee, a smoothie, or one of the amazing other drinks that Joan makes.

The Underground Clay Studios offer clay artists an opportunity to work with other artists and have access to equipment, especially as a next step after graduating from the CCCC Ceramics and Sculpture degree program. About three years ago, the Incubator was able to purchase some kilns, wheels, and other equipment for our studio artists to use. Christy Eubank, who is our Clay Studio Manager, handles the kiln firings, studio spaces and whatever else comes along in the Underground. Currently there are 12 artists working in the Underground and only one space still available.

Studios 227 (227 N Chatham Ave.) is the location where nine painters

create beautiful work in a wide variety of styles. The 227 group recently revitalized the front of the building with new awnings and fresh paint. It is fantastic. Studios 227 also houses the weaving studio where Jean Volrath teaches the CCCC weaving classes. The Incubator is in the process of developing several new studios that are slated to be ready in April. In addition to the clay, weaving and painting studios, studio artists include a world renowned guitar maker, a glass artist and more. Workshops are available to the public in pottery, writing, drawing, painting, weaving, paper art and more.

The Incubator houses three Galleries. The first is the NCAI Gallery where studio artists can display and sell their work. Other artists who live and work in Chatham and surrounding counties participate in the Gallery as well. Since this is a voluntarily run gallery, artists have an opportunity to work shifts, meet customers who buy their work, and sometimes get some great ideas from customers' suggestions. Artists also work on displays, marketing, receptions, repairs and the many other tasks required to keep the Gallery going. Gallery hours are 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. every 3rd Friday for the Art Walk. The NCAI Gallery is located at 223 N Chatham Avenue.

The second gallery is the PAF Gallery, dedicated in memory of Peggy Fullington, an artist, art teacher and long-time Siler City resident. Each month there is a new exhibit featuring a fantastic artist's work. In March, the PAF Gallery will feature the paintings of Keith Buckner. There will be a reception for Keith on 3rd Friday, March 18. People can have a chance to own a Keith Buckner painting that is being raffled for \$10 per ticket. Tickets are available at the NCAI Gallery and from NCAI Board members.

The Chatham County Camera Club maintains their terrific gallery at the Incubator, featuring Camera Club members, many of whom are widely known for their work. The club also holds monthly meetings in the Gallery. There is more information on their website and a link from the ncartsinubator.org website.

At this point, the NC Arts Incubator is a volunteer run organization and everyone really does pitch in to make it work and grow. We are in the process of searching for a part-time paid director and hope to have someone named in the next few weeks. We love to have visitors come and see what we do. Check out our website ncartsinubator.org or email us at galleryncai@embarqmail.com or call at 919.663.2072.

Sue Ulrich is manager of the NCAI Gallery.

Who rules the world?

Introverts or Extroverts?

Since my last article, I've received requests for more information about introverts and extroverts.

Extroverts get their energy from sources outside themselves including socialization with others. Extroverts tend to appear energetic, seek variety, are energized by activities, like to be in the middle of things, enjoy talking even with strangers, are self-promoters and networkers, may be aggressive in bids for attention and monopolize the limelight, may think out loud and prefer face-to-face contacts over written communications.

Introverts derive energy from their internal world of emotions and ideas. They often appear calm, self-contained, may prefer to observe rather than interact, prefer deep, close relationships with fewer friends, may feel uncomfortable or drained in social situations, may be slow to offer personal information to others, may prefer communicating one-to-one, usually need time to think before responding, may prefer written to verbal communication and may be creative and imaginative.

By now you may be able to place yourself in one or the other groups or you may have qualities found in both groups. People are born with these temperaments. Identical twins raised separately retain these characteristics regardless of the parenting style of their caretakers. Most data sources indicate that, at least in this society, more people are extroverted than introverted. Psychologists know there is no stigma, mental illness or dysfunction characteristic of either group; they are just different. Popular culture, however, has tended to criticize introverts as being shy, anxious, neurotic or aloof. But let's not judge a book by its cover. Introverts have a lot to contribute if you take the time to listen to them. In fact, introverts have been found to constitute 60 percent of highly gifted individuals. Einstein was an extreme introvert. In fact, in elementary school he was so quiet and withdrawn that he was actually thought to be "dull-witted."

Given that we live in a highly judgmental society, both introverts and extroverts may feel different or deficient because they lack the valued characteristics of the other group. Introverts are often criticized for their lack of easy socializing. They may not feel comfortable in participating in group interactions at work. Introverts may feel overstimulated and overwhelmed when attempting to follow the pace of extroverted friends.

Extroverts often feel bored, impatient and lonely when energizing social situations are not available to them. They may

Advice Line

by
Dr. Betty Phillips



feel frustrated when asked to work in solitary situations or produce written materials. As extroverts get older, they may have less energy and more need for internal resources, especially in retirement. My primary recommendation is for everyone to recognize their own strengths and advantages and not judge themselves negatively in comparison to others. It's important to nurture your own type of personality and adjust to life with stress reducing and happiness habits as I have described in other articles on my website.

There are, however, important reasons for understanding and developing some life strategies similar to the other temperament group. Introverts and extroverts are often attracted to each other and marry. Then, after the honeymoon, they may become uncomfortable with their personality differences. Introverts and extroverts often mingle in the workplace without a good understanding of how to interact with the other group. Social situations may be awkward when introverts and extroverts come together. You may find it helpful to learn more about the characteristics of the other group and learn how to develop some of their coping strategies for yourself.

Unfortunately, extroverts rarely write books. But introverts do, and they talk about both temperament groups. I recommend *The Introvert Advantage* by Marti Laney, Workman, 2002. (A word of caution. Dr. Laney writes about her style of introversion which is not necessarily the same as all introverts.) Nevertheless the book has valuable advice about relationship, communication and workplace issues between introverts and extroverts.

So who rules the world? Both, of course. Introverts may be our great thinkers and writers and extroverts may be our politicians and leaders. As our friend Albert Einstein advised, "Try not to become a man of success but rather to become a man of value." Ultimately one's life path should be measured according to your own purpose and values, not external achievements.

Need advice?

Send Dr. Betty Phillips questions about individual, relationship, marriage or family issues to BettyPhillips@BellSouth.net or 466 Eagle Point Road, Pittsboro 27312. Questions can be anonymous. Betty looks forward to hearing from you!

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