



CENTERS FOR THE ARTS BONITA SPRINGS

2 CENTERS | 1 MISSION | ARTS FOR ALL

VISUAL ARTS CENTER, 26100 OLD 41 RD

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, 10150 BONITA BEACH RD

ARTCENTERBONITA.ORG

[MEDIA DROPBOX](#)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

TWO NEW FINE ART EXHIBITIONS AT ARTS BONITA *On Safari with Jacke McCurdy and Sweet Land of Liberty*

Exhibitions On View July 7-27, 2023

—Open House & Reception Friday, July 7, 6-8pm

Visual Arts Center

26100 Old 41 Rd, Bonita Springs, FL

Gallery Hours: Monday-Saturday, 9am-5pm

Admission: Free



[Photos in DROPBOX](#)

Photo Captions:

Jacke McCurdy, *I am Listening*, 2022, photograph, 20 x 30 inches

Jacke McCurdy, *Innocence*, 2022, Photograph, 20 x 30 inches

Jacke McCurdy, *Sunset over Maasai Mara*, 2022, photograph, 30 x 20 inches

On Safari with Jacke McCurdy

Jacke McCurdy has made seven trips to the African continent, where she enjoys the natural beauty and people of Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Namibia, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. Jacke has macular degeneration and was recently declared legally blind. Last year, while on safari, she could not see, and she fully expected her sister Arden McCurdy would have to take the photographs, and that she would simply enjoy the atmosphere and people. Much to her surprise, Jacke discovered she still has the ability to take beautiful and compelling photographs. "I gazed toward the savannah and couldn't see a thing," Jacke said, "Then I picked up my camera and it was like a miracle—everything was clear through the digital viewfinder. I could hardly believe it. I could see the animals again." This exhibition features a selection of Jacke McCurdy's 2022 safari photographs.



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In addition to being a world traveler and philanthropist, Jacke McCurdy was the first woman admitted to the Baltimore County Bar Association, the first female Assistant State Attorney for Baltimore County, she served as one of the first female delegates in the Maryland House of Delegates and was the first female Vice President of Joseph E. Seagram and Sons.

Also opening July 7 is ***Sweet Land of Liberty***, a juried-awards exhibition featuring artwork created for Arts Bonita's annual patriotic-themed exhibition during the month of July. The *Sweet Land of Liberty* exhibition is on view through July 27 and features artwork by Southwest Florida artists in a variety of media including painting, sculpture, photography, and mixed media.

Campus-Wide Open House & Exhibition Opening Reception

On Friday, July 7, 6-8pm, Arts Bonita will host a campus-wide open house and reception celebrating both of these extraordinary new exhibitions. Come to the Visual Arts Center on Old 41 Road to meet and mingle with participating artists, congratulate the award winners, and enjoy art demonstrations, live music by local musician James St. Amour, and lite bites and beverages. This event is free and open to the public.

EXTRA: AN ARTS BONITA INTERVIEW WITH JACKE MCCURDY—

Were you warned about being careful before you went into the African bush country?

(Jacke) Absolutely, everyone is warned, and everyone is taken care of. The guides are all very well-trained. However, we know of one lady on another safari who got out of the van to photograph a lion and she was eaten—right there in front of her husband and son! These are wild animals, and everyone is warned what not to do. Also, after dark, there is always a guide who comes to the tent or building we are staying in and escorts us to dinner, and the path to the dining area is lit by torches.

Did you sleep overnight in the African countryside? If so, did you sleep in a tent?

(Jacke) Not in an on-the-ground tent. Their tents are built up and have bathrooms and the whole nine yards. The animals are right outside—you can hear them at night. At one place we had an indoor/outdoor shower, and the giraffes were tall enough to see into the courtyard, so they watched us while we bathed.

Do you have a favorite animal?

(Jacke) That is hard to answer. It really is. I guess I would have to say, Elephants. I like them a lot, but I like all the animals. Once you see how the animals interact with each other you can't help but like them all. Take the annual migration for example, the zebras and wildebeests travel together and protect each other from the crocodiles.

Which subjects do you find most compelling or challenging to photograph?

(Jacke) Any moving animals. You have to follow them with the camera.



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Do you have any advice on photographing animals?

(Jacke) Be patient—you have to wait for the right shot. Patience is a virtue for any type of photography: animals, flowers, or people. The safari we took was a photographic safari and the guides waited for everyone to get their photographs before moving on.

You mentioned you have an eye-health condition. Will you tell us more about it?

(Jacke) I have macular degeneration, and when you don't see, you don't do much. But I can see through the viewfinder of my digital camera. When I discovered that, it was like a miracle for me. I told my doctor to tell other patients. If they have a camera, they should get it out and try it. If they don't have one, they should borrow one and see if it works, as it did for me.

ABOUT THE CENTERS FOR THE ARTS BONITA SPRINGS:

Arts Bonita is committed to enriching the lives of the community by providing opportunities for artistic expression, education, and appreciation. There are two Arts Bonita locations dedicated to the visual and performing arts.

The Visual Arts Center, 26100 Old 41 Road, is a 10-acre, four-building campus, which consists of multiple fine art galleries, fully equipped art studios, a gift shop, beautiful sculpture gardens, and a nature preserve. A variety of classes are offered at this center including painting, drawing, clay, sculpture, glass, mixed media, and more. This center offers unique, year-round art exhibitions and other special events.

The Performing Arts Center, 10150 Bonita Beach Road, is a 4-acre, two-building campus, which is home to the 400-seat Hinman Auditorium and Gallery in the Round, the 200-seat Moe Auditorium & Film Center/Dance Studio, and fully equipped art studios. At this diverse center, patrons can enjoy an ongoing array of live concerts, theatre, comedy, film, lectures, youth and adult dance classes, music lessons, and art classes for all ages and skill levels.

ARTS FOR ALL—Seeking to serve the educational and cultural needs of the diverse community, Arts Bonita offers year-round programming, plus, three top-rated Art Festivals in January, February, and March, which draw hundreds of remarkable artists from around the world to beautiful, historic Downtown Bonita Springs, Florida.

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