

State & A Bar and Grill

An Infectious Positivity

By ERIN J. SMITH / CASA

BY EXPRESSING HER EMOTIONS THROUGH EACH BRUSH STROKE, artist Sara Wilcox

hopes to make the world a brighter place. Fifteen of her brand new paintings, as well as her handmade Christmas ornaments, will be on display at State & A Bar and Grill for the month of December. The show will open during December's 1st Thursday event on December 3rd.

"Throughout my life I've been known as a positive person. I always see the glass half full even when it's empty," said Wilcox. "It's easy to look at the darker side, but it's a challenge to find the light." In addition to her gaze on the brighter side, Wilcox's vibrant colors and complex compositions also reveal a more varied emotional palette. "My artwork is bright and colorful, and people can see that, but I'm not always feeling cheery when I'm painting," she said. "Picasso said that paintings are another form of a diary or journal. My inner thoughts come out in color."

The middle of three children and the only girl, Wilcox enjoyed art of all kinds while growing up including ceramics,



Sara Wilcox

painting, and drawing. A native Santa Barbaran, she began her formal art studies at SBCC while still a student at Santa Barbara High School when her mother, who was also interested in painting, enrolled in classes as well.

After graduating from high school, Wilcox had the opportunity to travel and backpacked throughout Southeast Asia for three months

accompanied by her mother. The travel-bug stuck, and Wilcox took another trip to Australia and New Zealand. "I definitely think I was influenced by my travels," she said. "I was inspired by the ideas, the concepts, and the different styles of art."

Wilcox also spent time in Europe, soaking in as much of the



Woman with Orange Hand by Sara Wilcox

art world as possible. "I loved Europe. It was like a self-taught art tour," she said. "I spent as much time as I wanted in museums. It was eye-opening to spend so much time with the great masters." Wilcox cites Picasso and Matisse as some of her favorites, as well as contemporary artists such as Jasper Johns and Richard Diebenkorn.

After travelling, Wilcox enrolled at Arizona State University where she earned a Bachelors in Fine Art with an emphasis on painting. She now works full-time as an artist and expresses herself through several mediums, including web and graphic design in addition to painting. She has also found a creative outlet in painting murals in schools and private

homes, and specializes in Mehndi Henna Art. She currently lives in Montecito and is a member of Santa Barbara Arts Collaborative, the Carpinteria Valley Arts Council, and Contemporary Arts Forum.

"I experience the most joy when finding the perfect match between color, form, and the black lines that hold them together. There's something about the space between color



Woman in Dream by Sara Wilcox

and form – it's a fascinating journey," she said. "I strive for that moment of richness, reaching for a moment of clarity between pencil and canvas."



State & A Bar and Grill is located at 1201 State St on the corner of State and Anapamu. Hours are 11am-11pm, Sun through Thurs, and 11am to midnight, Fri and Sat. For more information, call 966-1010 or visit www.saramurals.com.