

Art Park Sparks “Creative Chaos”

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Photo: Emily Metcalf

BY EMILY METCALF – Thirty artists working in a variety of media gathered around the Ward Warehouse Amphitheatre on Saturday for the Art Park, “A Creative Space for People and Art.” From 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. participating artists worked on paintings, sculptures, pottery, murals, and traditional Hawaiian crafts, while anyone passing by was able to watch and learn.

Described as “a space for artists and community to gather to enjoy artistic energy, new ideas, creativity, and beauty,” the Art Park was sponsored by Native Books/Na Mea Hawai’i, a local business with premises in Ward Warehouse, which functions as a gathering place and community resource center for native Hawaiian culture.

“I wanted to create a place for creative chaos,” said Maile Meyer, organizer of the Art Park and owner of Na Mea Hawai’i. “Put creative people in one space, have them doing what they love to do, and let

people figure out the rest. Sometimes things are too over-scripted, people just need some space to be creative.”

This “creative chaos” manifested itself in a variety of ways for both kids and adults: drawing with markers and crayons on tables covered in paper, watching artist demonstrations, and contributing to a community mural. All told, several hundred people participated in these activities over the course of the day.



Photo: Emily Metcalf

“A lot of the kids got really involved, some of them were drawing, painting, chalking, hopefully learning about different media,” said Maile Neff, another of the event coordinators. Neff said that it is important for all kids to be exposed to various types of art, and events such as this one encourage more involvement and creativity in an open and energizing environment.

The event included a particular focus on spreading awareness about traditional Hawaiian arts. Local Hawaiian cultural practitioners created and displayed baskets, tapa cloth, fishing implements, and other native crafts, conveying the value of these activities to a new generation.

The weekend also featured Do Your pART! A Noisy Art Auction for Public School Art Education. From June 24–26, Na Mea Hawai'i housed this auction, featuring pieces donated by local artists, to benefit local public charter and Hawaiian immersion schools.

Meyer said that she hopes to make the Art Park and Do Your pART! Auction an annual event, and is hopeful that the idea will catch on and grow. “The Art Park is a traveling concept, after all, it’s a space for people and art, and that space can be in lots of places.”