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## Landscape artist wins a change of scenery

By Alyssa LaRenzie

Times regional staff

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Jim Dean/Times regional staff

Nancy Everett looks at her painting of a dog she saw on a front porch during a previous visit to Colorado.

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Hundreds of pastels in nearly every shade are packed into Nancy Everett's wooden Heilman box, which served as her carry-on during a plane ride last weekend.

The south Forsyth artist is spending more than a week in Breckenridge, Colo., staying in a downtown historic home for the Tin Shop residency program, where she'll paint the local scenes and teach.

Her favorite inspirations are landscapes. Everett's home studio has works depicting Georgia gardens, Florida beaches and Lake Lanier, her hometown favorite to paint.

Now, she'll work on adding the colors of the rolling Colorado mountains.

"Out West, the vista for landscapes is just wonderful," she said prior to her trip. "It's just as beautiful here, but it's beautiful in a different way."

Everett needs the pastels to ensure that she gets every color just right. "The trees and the grasses take on their own type of coloring, depending on where you are."

Everett likes to include color in her paintings, often coloring the background of a white canvas before beginning a work.

Her small home studio holds hundreds of impressionistic outdoor scenes, which she paints either on location or from a photo.

This week, she'll share her techniques when teaching classes and meeting with the community, all part of her responsibilities in the Tin Shop program.

Everett plans to instruct on "using photography as a tool and not a crutch," she said.

In its fourth year, the year-round residency program has attracted artists from across the nation to spend more than a week at a time.

Everett will be the first to represent Georgia, city planner Jennifer Cram said. She was selected for her work quality, personality and willingness to open doors.

"Having someone who is as open to talk about their work and share their experiences will be great for the community," Cram said.

Leaving the doors open to access artists is what led Everett to discover the program while vacationing in the Rocky Mountains town.

During her usual morning walks to photograph interesting subjects for paintings, she stumbled upon the shop, which that week featured a fabric artist who had strung her work through the trees.

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Though Everett had never participated in a residency program, she decided to apply to return to the art-friendly town since the setting felt comfortable.

Many residency programs stick artists far out in secluded natural spots, she said, but this one keeps them close to people.

"It's not like I'm living in the woods having to kill my food," she joked.

In fact, Everett finds that she does her best work inside a studio with some music blasting on the stereo.

A stack of CDs in her home studio includes everything from country to classical to Flamenco, one of her favorites.

"I start painting in time with the music," she said. "I can really crank out the paintings then."

The escape to a one-woman artist's studio is a welcome experience for the mother of two. "I'm really looking forward to 10 days of uninterrupted painting time," Everett said.

Locally, Everett keeps active with her art, participating in a group with other artists and taking opportunities to paint on site.

She also shows work at Atlanta galleries and continues to pursue education and workshops from other artists.



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