

Alternative galleries offer art for daily life

By [Chelsey Engelhard Ewen, The Arts Partnership](#) on Feb 19, 2018 at 8:15 a.m.

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Scott Seiler's work is displayed at Trinity Lutheran Church, 210 7th St. S., Moorhead. Photo courtesy Scott Seiler 4 / 5

Art exhibits are often associated with museums and designated gallery spaces where people can browse and purchase original artwork.

But as a community that celebrates arts and culture, the Fargo-Moorhead metro is home to alternative gallery spaces that bring art to the public instead by incorporating art exhibitions into their daily operations.

Entities like Nichole's Fine Pastry, Luna Fargo, the City of Fargo, Fargo Public Library and Trinity Lutheran Church are among many alternative gallery spaces in the area that regularly curate and update local art exhibitions in their spaces.

For Luna Fargo and Nichole's Fine Pastry, local art exhibits have been part of their business structures since they opened.

As culinary artists themselves, these business owners say it makes sense to incorporate visual arts as well, says Nichole's Fine Pastry owner Nichole Hensen.

"For those of us in these four walls all the time, a change of scenery is good for us, and it's good for everyone coming in here," she says.

Luna Fargo owner Nikki Berglund says changing art exhibits complements the style of the restaurant, which is always changing its menu according to season and available ingredients.

"It's so cool to do that with the art too," Berglund says. "You can have an entirely different dining experience from one visit to the next. It freshens things up and keeps people guessing."

The City of Fargo started hosting visual art exhibits in the hallway between the City Commission Chambers and the City Commission Offices in 2016.

City Hall art exhibits are a program of the Fargo Arts and Culture Commission, established in 2015 to ensure the public has access to engaging art experiences, says the City of Fargo Assistant Planner Brittany Rakowitz.



Midge Fors and Cy Dahlen hang out in front of Jay Pfeifer's art exhibit at Luna Fargo. Chelsey Engelhard Ewen

Rakowitz, who also serves as the arts and culture liaison, says art exhibits at City Hall not only support artists and exposes their work to the public; they also create a vibrant atmosphere for the City of Fargo staff.

The city rotates artwork in a range of media every six months and plans to expand the program once construction is finished on the new city hall.

"We want to make sure that we are exposing the public to all types of art," Rakowitz says. "It's up to them to decide if they like it or not, but it's our duty to make the art accessible to them."

The public is welcome to view the City Hall art exhibits at 200 3rd St. N. during regular office hours.

Fargo Public Library, which operates under the City of Fargo's umbrella, features artwork every month that welcomes every citizen that enters through its doors.

The library has displayed local art exhibitions in its north entrance since 2009, but has incorporated original regional artwork in its permanent collection since the 1960s.

Beth Postema, deputy director of the library, says hosting public art exhibits fulfills the library's mission to expand public knowledge and offer new perspectives to the community.

"Art is way to expose people to things they may not have always thought of before," she says.

Trinity Lutheran Church in Moorhead is another entity in the community that welcomes visual artists to show their work.

Church member and passionate arts advocate Carol Zielinski has coordinated exhibits at the church for the past 20 years. She says the art exhibits, which rotate every couple of months, expose church members to local artists and vice versa.

"We have so many artists that need a place to display artwork," Zielinski says.

More alternative galleries in the area include Atomic Coffee, Drekker Brewing Company, Essentia Health Atrium, HoDo Restaurant, Make Room Fargo, Red Raven Espresso Parlor, Red River Coffee Co., Twist and the West Fargo City Hall Grand Foyer, although this is not an exhaustive list.

Nichole's Fine Pastry and City of Fargo exhibits are privately curated, but artists interested in learning more about exhibit opportunities at Luna Fargo, Fargo Public Library and Trinity Lutheran Church can contact each entity during their regular hours.

This article is part of a content partnership with The Arts Partnership, a nonprofit organization cultivating the arts in Fargo, Moorhead and West Fargo. For more information, visit theartspartnership.net.