



Great Swamp Watershed Association

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Protecting our waters and our land for 30 years

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

22 November 2011

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Green Village Photographer Featured In Upcoming Exhibit Celebrating The Great Swamp
Twenty-five well-established artists—many local—find inspiration in New Jersey's Great Swamp.

Protecting our Waters and our Land, a new exhibition of fine art coming to Studio 7 Fine Art Gallery and the Bernardsville Public Library this December and January, features artists' visions of the Great Swamp, one of New Jersey's last wildernesses.

Located less than a stone's throw from some of the state's most densely populated urban and suburban centers, the Great Swamp's large, undeveloped tracts of forest and wetlands provide a safe haven for a wide variety of plants and animals that have been pushed out of other areas by human activity.

The intrinsic natural beauty of the Great Swamp and the ten towns it touches have inspired 25 well-established artists—many of them local—to create a multitude of stunning works in oil, pastels, watercolors, photography, and other media.

Two environmentally concerned art aficionados, Kathleen Palmer of Bernardsville and Ben Wolkowitz of Madison, have collected these pieces together into a single exhibit celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Great Swamp Watershed Association and honoring the organization's ongoing commitment to the protection of the Great Swamp's environmentally sensitive waters and land. Palmer is also the owner of Studio 7 Fine Art Gallery, while Wolkowitz serves as the current President of the Great Swamp Watershed Association.

"The Great Swamp Watershed Association has played a crucial role in protecting our natural resources," Ms. Palmer said recently, "This exhibit honors their efforts and serves as a thank you from the many artists who have loved to photograph and paint this pristine area of our great state."

Protecting our Waters and our Land includes photographic pieces by multimedia producer and Green Village resident Elliott Ruga.

Mr. Ruga's work has been shown at the Case Gallery in Boonton, Riverbank Arts in Stockton, 80 Community Place in Morristown, the Eastern Environmental Law Center in Newark, and most recently at a solo show entitled, "Why ain't there no tea in Malawi?" at the JB Kline Gallery in Lambertville.

As senior policy analyst and campaign coordinator for the New Jersey Highlands Coalition, Ruga is no stranger to environmental issues. He is also no stranger to the Great Swamp. The artist has lived in the region for more than 30 years and, in 2004, produced a video retrospective featuring the last interview conducted with New Jersey environmental pioneer and perennial Great Swamp advocate Helen C. Fenske.

Of the three photographs Ruga has submitted to *Protecting our Waters and our Land*, he writes, “I have tried to capture Great Swamp’s peaceful and calming allure. While Great Swamp doesn’t offer the artist, say, the drama of rippled mountains, or the intensity of white water...[it] teems with life nurtured by its saturated soils and stilled waters.”

Protecting Our Waters And Our Land opens to the public on Thursday, December 1, 2011, and will remain on display through Saturday, January 28, 2012. Half of the exhibition will be housed at Studio 7 Fine Art Gallery located at 5 Morristown Road in Bernardsville. The other half of the exhibition will be housed across the street at the Bernardsville Public Library located at 1 Anderson Hill Road in Bernardsville. Please check the hours of operation for each venue in order to determine the best time to visit.

A reception celebrating the opening of the exhibit will be held as part of the monthly BernARTSville Art Walk series on Friday, December 2, 2011. All are welcome to stop by Studio 7 Fine Art Gallery between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., and the Bernardsville Library between 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., for this special viewing. Participating artists, as well as representatives from the Great Swamp Watershed Association will be in attendance. Refreshments will be served.

Works displayed in the exhibition will be available for sale at a variety of price points. Notecards depicting selected works from the exhibit will be available for sale from Studio 7 Fine Art Gallery and the Great Swamp Watershed Association (www.GreatSwamp.org). A percentage of proceeds from all sales will go to support environmental education, advocacy, and stewardship programs within the Great Swamp watershed region.

Participating artists include Stephanie Amato, Albert L. Bross Jr., Charlie Churchill, Mark de Mos, Susan Donnell, Tim Gaydos, Gerry Heydt, Lee W. Hughes, Ari Kaufman, Carol Livingston, James McGinley, Doug Merritt, Dannielle Mick, Neil Nappe, Nancy Ori, Anthony Panzera, Robert W. Pillsbury, Linda Quinn, John Reilly, Charles Robinson, Elliott Ruga, Deborah Seymour, Alana Van Rensselaer, and Ray Yaros.

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Photos of the artists or artwork mentioned may be available to press, please inquire for additional information.

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Founded in 1981, the Great Swamp Watershed Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and protecting the water and land of the 36,000-acre watershed region in Morris and Somerset counties. We work to

maintain the beauty and health of our open space, and to monitor and protect five streams: Loantaka Brook, Great Brook, Primrose Brook, Black Brook, and the Upper Passaic—which feed into the Passaic River and provide drinking water to more than a million people.