

2101 Winter Street Studios, November 21, 5-10pm and November 22, 11-8pm. Free to the public.
Visit www.winterholidayartmarket.com/node/4 for more details.



Generally we bring you a gallery, but this month to help you kick off the retail frenzy that is about to ensue, why not support your local arts and snag an original gift or two?

Winter Street Artist Studios is home to some of Houston's most avant-garde painters, sculptors, even musical instrument makers. Unless you've taken in an "art crawl" during Second Saturdays at Winter Street, you probably have no idea what goes on in the renovated warehouse, a behemoth of stone corridors, maze-like hallways and white steel doors. Installation lights for gallery shows hang from the ceiling and, except for the whispering of a door shutting somewhere in the distance and the small business cards taped to the outside of their doors with tiny replicas of what each artist makes inside those silent studios, there's barely evidence of life. Except for downstairs in Spacetaker's office.

Spacetaker is a professional, nonprofit artist resource organization that employs bubbly PR and advertising personalities to bind the art community of Houston together. To help them connect and celebrate the opening of a fellow artist, to show support for a gallery space that is in trouble with funding, or to help over 150 local artists sell more than \$123,000 of their own work. One of their main goals is that artists who want to support themselves by selling their art are able to. But a lot of what they do is throw parties, really great parties. Parties with a purpose.



So the normally silent, blank canvas walls of Winter Street Studios explode with festivity on **November 21st and 22nd** when Spacetaker hosts **WHAM, the 4th Annual Winter Holiday Art Market**. The gallery-white halls will be hung with wares by a selection of juried vendors, and the focus of the event is to make it easy and fun to buy local. The celebration will include performances by many live, local bands and demonstrations by artists (think soap-making and at-home-made presents you can make with the owner of Sew Crafty, the Heights sewing lounge).

Food catered by Beaver's and El Patio are sure to sustain you on your quest for that perfect toy for your niece or beautiful jewelry set for Mom – and all the while, you can be proud of supporting the Houston economy and the local artists of our city. Complimentary beverages provided by Dripping Springs Vodka and Sweet Leaf Tea are all part of the fun and the reason you should put off your trip to that busy mall this year. Since when has a mall trip ever kicked off a two-day shopping event with a happy hour (Friday, November 21st from 5-10pm)? The next day's worry-free and family-

friendly activities begin at 11am and continue until 8pm. Best of all, the entire event is **FREE**.

The artists selected for this event have gift-friendly art – homemade soaps, stationery, ornaments, jewelry, photography, sculpture and much more, all designed to make fabulous and unique gifts. Former WHAM shoppers report buying all their holiday gifts there, so there's hope for those of us who don't have a clue that there's holiday shopping to be done and it's already late November.

Hip local bands will replace the piped-in, lame holiday classics that resound through every corridor of the shopping malls, and the food and happy hour-themed drinks will replace a caffeine-driven race to find the perfect purse for your sister or scented soap basket for your grandmother. **For those with kiddos, there's a children's corner set up in a huge gallery space. With the help of Jerry's Artarama, the kids will be as busy as elves** making their own holiday creations. And one of the big event draws is the show on display at the Winter Street Studios – The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (CAMH) Teen Council will have a juried show of their own work decorating one of the main gallery areas. A partnership Spacetaker is very proud to promote.