

Top Reasons for Art Lovers to Visit the San Juan Islands



SMALL MUSEUM, IMPORTANT EXHIBITS

[San Juan Islands Museum of Art](#) offers rotating exhibits of both local and international artists. Past exhibits include the works of Ansel Adams, Imogen Cunningham, Ai Weiwei, William Morris, Francisco Goya and more. Housed in a sleek building of modern glass and steel design, SJIMA has three galleries and a classroom for lectures and atelier workshops. Gaze in through the soaring glass windows to the dedicated installation space, then enter the smaller galleries for an intimate experience.

MANY ARTISTS, ONE ROOF

[Orcas Island Artworks](#) began with a handful of artists in 1981 in the hamlet of Olga in a remodeled 1938 strawberry barreling plant. Now 45 artists strong, the co-op is also home to The Catkin Café, while the James Hardman Gallery is open upstairs in the loft, showing work by one of the Artworks founders. [Chimera Gallery](#), a Lopez Island artists' co-op, [Island Studios](#) on San Juan Island and [Waterworks Gallery](#) also feature the works of Island artists.

ALL THE ISLANDS HAVE A STAGE

On Lopez, the [Lopez Center for Community and the Arts](#) is the center of cultural life, hosting musicians, plays and other performances in their beautiful building in Lopez Village. The [San Juan Community Theatre](#) produces several plays a year with full orchestra and local professional-level actors, as well as traveling theatrical, dance, musical performances and live

performing arts in HD. [The Orcas Center](#) is a hub of Orcas Island's theatre and cultural community and hosts dozens of productions each year, including plays, dance productions, live opera and theatre in HD, and more.

ART IN OUR PARKS

From dawn to dusk every day, the [San Juan Islands Sculpture Park](#)—one of the world's largest outdoor sculpture parks—charms visitors with its 20 acres of outdoor art. With over 125 rotating creations from world-renowned sculptors, five marked trails for wandering and a serene pond, it's the perfect place for a long stroll while visiting nearby Roche Harbor Resort. At the Port of Friday Harbor, renowned native Coast Salish artist, Susan A. Point's monumental house posts sculpture, *Interaction*, invites viewers to sit at the base of one of the posts to become part of the artwork. Salish carved sculptures also grace the waterfront at the San Juan Island National Historical Park's English Camp unit.

BEHIND STUDIO DOORS

See artists in their natural habitats on [San Juan](#), [Orcas](#) and [Lopez](#) Islands during the Artist Studio Tours, each on different weekends throughout the summer. These free, self-guided tours take art lovers through working studios open to the public. Artists not only display their artwork but share insights into how their art is created and what inspires them. A perfect way to see the rarely-glimpsed hidden backroads of the islands.

Top Photo: San Juan Islands Sculpture Park by Ken Soleta

Bottom Photos: Lopez Village Green, Ron Norman Sculpture by SJIVB / Shakespeare Under the Stars by SJIVB / San Juan Islands Museum of Art by Michael Bertrand



The San Juan Islands are considered an “Arts Hot Spot” by the Washington State Arts Commission for the per capita number of arts businesses, galleries and individuals earning a living from the arts.

FILM FESTIVAL FUN

The [Orcas Island Film Festival](#) in Eastsound focuses on full-length feature films, as well as cutting-edge films from around the world. It's a unique opportunity to see new films before the awards season buzz. The [Friday Harbor Film Festival](#) features documentary films with a connection to the Pacific Rim and beyond. Films inspire and enlighten filmgoers to take action on a variety of emerging environmental and cultural issues. Both festivals provide a rare chance to mingle, discuss and take part in Q & A with filmmakers.

MUSIC, MUSIC EVERYWHERE

The strains of all kinds of music can be heard almost every day on these music-loving islands. The [Salish Sea Early Music Festival](#) performs on historical instruments, the [Orcas Island Chamber Music Festival](#) brings performers from all over the world. Doe Bay Fest at Doe Bay Resort & Retreat on Orcas Island sells out every year and features some of the Northwest's top alternative bands. Each island also has a lineup of concerts and musicals at performing arts centers.

FESTIVALS OF ALL STRIPES

The San Juan Summer Arts Festival is held in Brickworks Plaza each Friday in August. Everyone is encouraged to take part in hands-on activities at this event, listen to a stellar lineup of bands, and check out the talented artists selling pottery, photography, baskets, clothing, woodwork, soaps, lotions, paintings and more. Art is also a star attraction at Winter Holiday Markets and Summer Farmers Markets on Orcas, Lopez and San Juan Islands.

FEELING BOOKISH?

[Orcas Island Lit Fest](#) is a celebration of literature and community held each spring on beautiful Orcas Island. Festivalgoers join prizewinning authors and exciting new voices from across the country for three days of panels, workshops, readings, and events. Engage with writers and their work in an intimate setting that welcomes everyone who loves a good story.

COOL SUMMER SUGGESTIONS

[Shakespeare Under the Stars](#) performances, music on the San Juan Historical Society lawn, music at the Port of Friday Harbor, the [San Juan Island Lavender Festival and Arts Fair](#), and the art kiosks at Roche Harbor all gather artists and patrons together on San Juan Island. On Orcas Island, music on the Eastsound Green takes place on select Sundays. Check out the events calendar at www.visitsanjuans.com/events to find out the latest events on all three islands.

Contemporary choral composer Morten Lauridsen and kinetic sculptor Anthony Howe are among the many world-renowned artists performing or displaying their work in the islands.

Look for this and other media resources with hot links on the MEDIA page of the San Juan Islands Visitors Bureau website: www.visitsanjuans.com/media



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*Photos: Tony Hunt, Jr., Mask, Arctic Raven Gallery by SJIVB / Aloysia Friedmann, Orcas Island Chamber Music by Ho Huang
Orcas Island Pottery by Tyrone Lee / Vanessa Julian Table, Orcas Island Artworks by Todd Montgomery*

