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ARTWORK, BY HAND

ATELIER IN TRUCKEE CREATES A SPACE FOR ARTISTS OF ALL LEVELS

BY PAUL GEORGE

A 1958 Heidelberg Windmill press sits in the storefront window of **Atelier Truckee**. The printing press, however, is not a museum curio or a dusty antique. It is a working press, used to create greeting cards for the store. It also reflects the philosophy of the shop's owners, married couple Brain Hess and Heather River, that art should be a tactile experience.

"Atelier is about creating art with your own hands," River says.

Located in the historic downtown Truckee, Calif. in a section of 19th century buildings cradled among the hills and evergreen trees of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Atelier, French for "workshop," offers artists of all skill levels the opportunity to learn.

The workshop classes include subjects such as printing, photography, drawing, mixing drinks and knitting. River says most of the workshops are for adults, but Atelier also offers kid-friendly workshops, including how to make paper tube monsters. The store also sells art supplies.

Atelier also has a gallery, featuring works by the artists teaching at the workshops. And beginning summer 2015 the shop will begin sponsoring artist residencies. The residencies, River says, will give artists a place to work, and allow visitors the opportunity

to interact with the artists. At the end of an artist's residency, Atelier will host a gallery show of the artist's work.



River developed an entrepreneurial spirit at a young age, opening her first used clothing store at age 16. About three years ago, she and Hess opened **Bespoke**, a store featuring products created by independent artists. They began offering arts and crafts classes, but soon ran out of space for the workshops at the store. They opened Atelier in March, 2015 in a space adjacent to **Bespoke**.

Hess and River see Atelier as an extension of Truckee's growing art community, which Hess says is blossoming.

"More people are deciding to stay in Truckee full time rather than being transient," Hess says. "People are looking for something else to do beside skiing and winter sports. People are wanting to connect back to using their own hands to make things, and part of that is appreciating other people who do that."

IF YOU GO:

Truckee Atelier
530-386-2700
ateliertruckee.com
10128 Donner Pass Road
Truckee, Calif.
Open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
daily

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