Seventeen developed greenway trails dot the varying landscapes of Mecklenburg County, each with its own topography-informed personality – from the distinctly urban Sugar Creek trail, located just outside of Uptown with a view of the Charlotte skyline to rural routes, where meeting face-to-face with deer is de rigueur.

This diverse beauty struck Kellie Scott, owner of Red Sky art gallery, and inspired her to begin a yearlong project dedicated to capturing that beauty on canvas. “I walk the greenway near my house everyday,” says Scott. “It’s such a gift to the community that I feel a lot of people don’t take advantage of – I wanted to make it more known.”

Not an artist herself, Kellie enlisted the help of longtime friend and businesswoman-turned-artist Barbara Jamison to flesh out the idea and pioneer the project’s organization. Together, the two decided to gather a group of local artists to paint the city’s various greenways throughout each of Charlotte’s four distinct seasons and then exhibit those paintings at RedSky, giving 10% of the sales to the Catawba Lands Conservancy, a nonprofit dedicated to conserving land for public benefit in Charlotte and the surrounding areas.

“I knew the challenge would be to find a great group of artists who were willing to sign on for a year-long project, and that’s why I wanted to work with Barbara,” says Scott. “I knew that she would be great and pick other artists who would be, too.”

Coincidentally, all of the artists Jamison selected were women. “I wasn’t actively seeking female artists – it was accidental,” says Jamison. “I wanted to represent a variety of styles – from realism to abstraction, and the artists that were the best fit for the project were women.”

As the women began work on their individual pieces for the exhibit, they soon realized the value of the partnership they had entered into, and decided to make it official, dubbing themselves the pARTners.

“Being an artist can be isolating,” says Fonda Doerre, member of the pARTners group, “So working together allows us to push one another, enforce deadlines, and really hold each other accountable.”
Together, the nine artists have created an impressive collection of artwork that beautifully showcases Charlotte’s greenways exactly as Scott had envisioned when she dreamt the project more than a year ago.

“People will be absolutely enchanted when they see this exhibit,” says Scott. “It would be impossible to not have an emotional connection with this work.”

The exhibit, Through the Seasons: Charlotte’s Greenways, opens on Friday, October 11 and runs through Saturday, November 9. www.redskygallery.com; www.partnersart.net

http://www.charlotteobserver.com/2013/09/25/4342043/the-big-picture.html#storylink=cpy
Clockwise from top: pARTners founders, Kellie Scott and Barbara Jamison; Jamison’s “Morning Fishing at Monroe Road;” “The Courtship;” Salisbury’s “Snow Run;” Shug Lockett’s “Nothing Gold Stays;” and Fonda Doerre’s “Fall Greenway.”