

INTERSTATE 93 IN NEW HAMPSHIRE YOU CAN GET THERE FROM HERE

One of the best times of year in New Hampshire is the late spring and early summer. Trees are green with new leaves, flowers are in bloom and the black flies haven't hatched yet. New Hampshire has many opportunities to see contemporary art while enjoying all of the state's beautiful scenery – just follow Interstate 93 north and enjoy these stops along the way.

MANCHESTER

WHAT TO SEE: "Romare Bearden: A Black Odyssey," through August 17 at the Currier Museum of Art (150 Ash St.). Colorful collages and watercolors recreate Homer's *Odyssey* with imagery rooted in the African-American experience. Also on display are some of the Currier's collection of American and European art works.

"SHIFT: The Art of the Bicycle" celebrates National Bike Month from May 5-June 28 at Studio 550 (550 Elm St.), across the street from the Verizon Center. Studio 550 also offers drawing, clay, book arts, stained glass, dance and movement classes for adults and kids.

"The Language of Color" continues through June 27 at Art 3 Gallery (44 West Brook St.), a converted mill building. The show will include such artists as Stan Moeller, Susan Bailey, G.C. Williams and Marilene Sawaf.

WHERE TO EAT: Cotton in the Historic Millyard District (75 Arms St.) is open for lunch and dinner (reservations are recommended, though if you're lucky, the patio is first-come, first-served in good weather). Owned by Chef Jeffrey Paige, Cotton is known for its "sophisticated and eclectic American comfort food." *Bon Appetit* magazine named it "One of the 10 best neighborhood restaurants in America." The *New York Times* called it "hip."



TOP: Romare Bearden, *Home to Ithaca, 1977*, collage (Courtesy Mount Holyoke College Art Museum), © Romare Bearden Foundation, at Currier Museum of Art.

CONCORD

WHAT TO SEE: The "17th Annual Outdoor Sculpture Exhibit" will be on view from June 22 - October 26 at Mill Brook Gallery & Sculpture Garden (236 Hopkinton Rd), recently named the HIPPO Best Art Gallery in Concord for 2014. Amid the rolling fields and horse pastures, striking contemporary sculpture is set among flowers, woodlands and ponds. Indoors are three gallery rooms with rotating exhibits by sculptors, painters and other talented artists.

"Bert Yarborough: I've Got My Back: Paintings and Prints" features colorful abstract mixed-media paintings by this well-known artist, gallerist and teacher from May 6-June 6 at McGowan Fine Art (10 Hills Ave.)

WHERE TO EAT: Steps from McGowan is Hermanos Cocina Mexicana (11 Hills Ave.), a local favorite for Mexican food.

They've won awards for best nachos, best chimichangas and best margaritas, but you don't want to miss the nacho salad or the cheese enchiladas with green chile sauce.



Jim Walsh, *Firenze*, photograph, at Studio 550, Manchester.



Waldo E. Jespersen, *My Kismet Hops*, fanatically painted metal, 12', at Mill Brook Gallery and Sculpture Garden, Concord.

Continuing your drive north brings you to New Hampshire's Lakes Region.

SANDWICH

WHAT TO SEE: From Memorial Day to mid-October, the Patricia Ladd Carega Gallery (69 Maple St.) shows work by leading contemporary artists in the beautifully restored Sunshine Farm barn. The two levels and individual bays of the building result in many different mini-spaces, some wide open, others more intimate.

PLYMOUTH

WHAT TO SEE: "Exploring the World Around Us: New Work by Mary Ellen Sakura" takes place from June 9 - July 15 at the Gallery at Red Gate Farm (188 Highland St.). Sakura's landscapes reflect elements of story, contradiction, contrast and fragility.

A gallery in a knitting shop? Inspire Gallery, located within Inspire 2 Knit & Tea (12 Yeaton Rd., just off Route 25) combines the two with remarkable success. Inspire will be showing Kayla LaFond's prints and etching installation throughout May, followed in June by paintings by Ursula Cohen.

WHERE TO EAT: Plymouth has several great options right on Main Street. Thai Smile (#135), one of Plymouth's most popular restaurants, offers a variety of Asian foods and lets you choose your own preferred level of spiciness. Another local favorite is Main Street Station (#105), an old-fashioned diner serving hearty American fare for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Or just pick up a tasty ice cream cone at M'n M Scoops (#67).

I-93 winds through eight beautiful miles of mountains, cliffs, ponds and trees in Franconia Notch State Park. Ride the aerial tramway to the top of Cannon Mountain – on a clear day, you can see all the way to Canada. Continuing "north of the Notch" on I-93, exit 40 leads to the little town of...

BETHLEHEM

WHAT TO SEE: "Flights of Fancy: Avian Art by Jeannette Fournier and Rosemary Conroy" throughout May at The Gallery at WREN (2011 Main St.), followed in June by "Here, Where Ends Always Meet: Paintings by Loretta Stride, Turnings by Diane Vinyard." The Gallery at WREN has a mission to create opportunities for professional artists and promote culture throughout the region.

WHERE TO EAT: For exotic salads and sandwiches, Cold Mountain Café (2015 Main St.) is two doors down from The Gallery at WREN. In good weather, you can sit at one of the umbrella-covered tables outdoors – but bring cash because they don't accept credit or debit cards.



LITTLETON

WHAT TO SEE: Mill Street, just off of Main St. on Littleton's Riverwalk, hosts the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen Gallery, The Gallery at the Nest (which coordinates the second Friday Littleton Art Walk scheduled for the second Friday of the month from 5-8 p.m., June through August) and BAD-ART (35 Mill St.), a funky and eclectic space owned by Jon Stroker: "The type of art that we do is mainly Outsider, Pop and Folk Art ... I can't tell you how many times people have walked in and said 'this isn't bad art, it's good art,'" he told artscope last summer.

Jim Zwadow, *Pedestrians*, at Art 3 Gallery, Manchester.

WHERE TO EAT: Miller's Café & Bakery (16 Mill St.) serves breakfast and lunch directly across from the aforementioned galleries. The deck overlooking the Ammonoosuc River is a great place to enjoy one of their award-winning sandwiches. If it's dinnertime, go to Bailiwicks at Thayers Inn (111 Main St.). Just a snack? Everyone talks about Bishop's Homemade Ice Cream on Cottage Street.

These are just a few of the venues showcasing contemporary art in New Hampshire. If you visit, plan to want to return again soon because it will take more than one visit to explore them all!

| Marcia Santore

JUNE 13» JUNE 15

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**Gallery
at the
Nest**

Littleton Celebration Weekend will be held June 13th through the 15th. The festivities will kick off with the summer's first Second Friday Art Night 5-8 pm, where you can find Art, Music and Food. The fun continues all weekend with a Pollyanna Celebration, Old Home Day events and a Blues, Brews and Views music event. All to be held in historic downtown Littleton NH. Please visit our website for more information.

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