

# OPENING UP TO art

HALF MOON BAY ARTIST INCORPORATES A BIT OF HISTORY IN EACH NEW WORK AS PART OF SILICON VALLEY OPEN STUDIOS

By Sarah Griego Guz | Photos by Cat Cutillo



Sheehan hand-cut over 100 pieces of copper to create this five-foot-wide copper and wood wall sculpture.

**A**s Silicon Valley Open Studios enters its 30<sup>th</sup> year, local artists are joining in by opening their workspaces to the public. This is the second year Coastside creators have participated in the regional experience that connects artists with art enthusiasts.

Silicon Valley Open Studios publishes a phone book of sorts, listing artist studio locations available for browsing during the first three weekends in May. The information is also found online. Collectors, art investors and the rest of us have an opportunity to tour these spaces while reconnecting with favorite artists or discovering new talent.

Ross Sheehan of Outerlands Gallery is one of the artists taking part in the event. He is the husband of Half Moon Bay magazine photographer Cat Cutillo. His studio in Half Moon Bay will be open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on May 21 and 22.

Sheehan specializes in mixing mediums and textures to create conversation pieces. He constantly pushes the envelope by leveraging the myriad techniques in his arsenal to construct unconventional pieces.

One moment Sheehan may be welding the twisted frame of a vintage bicycle. The next, he may be applying layers of pigments to canvas.

His approach is one that embraces failure as well as rebirth.

"I usually work in groups of about 20 to 30 pieces at a



Sheehan mixes oil paint on his oversized palette in his Half Moon Bay studio.



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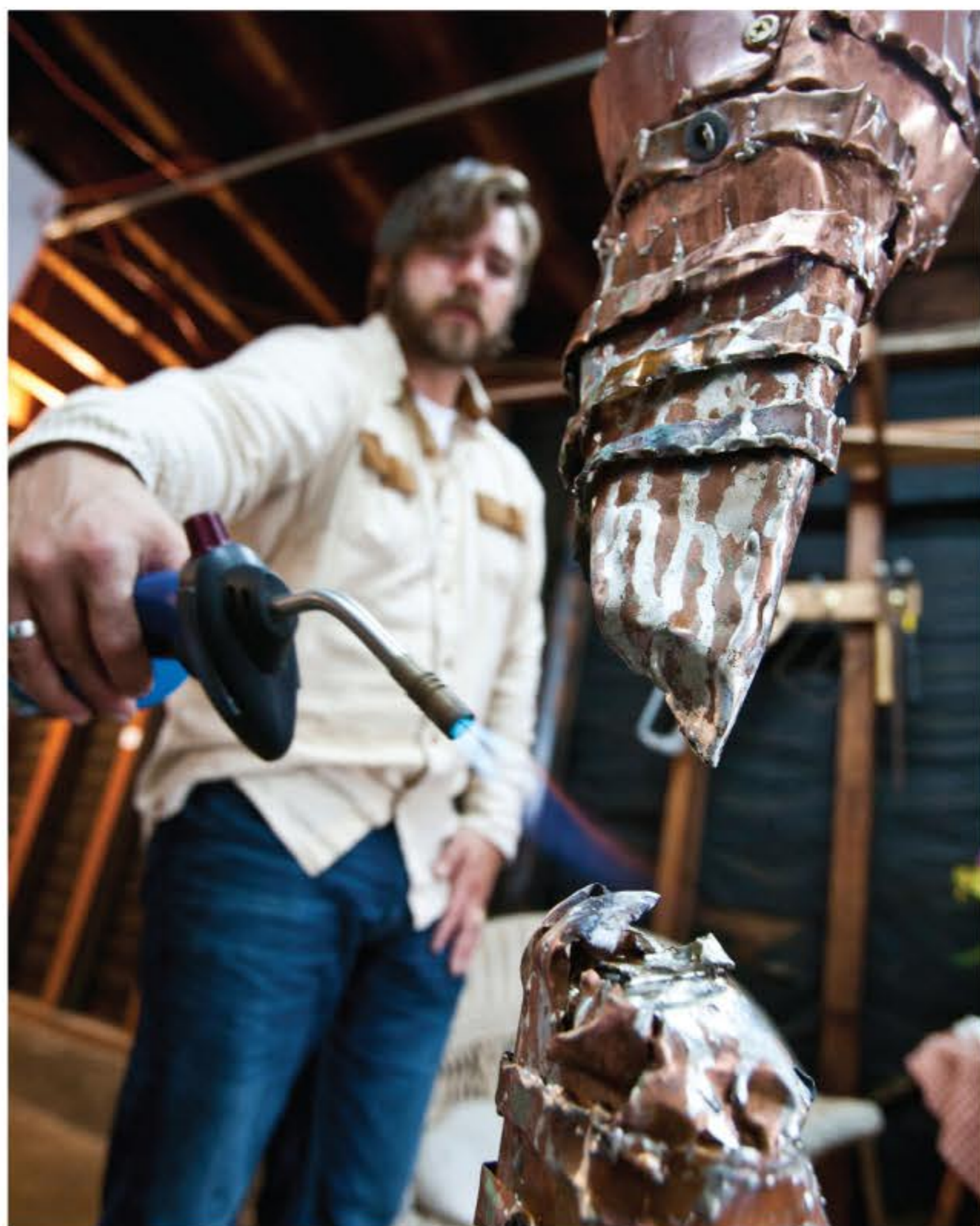
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Sheehan puts the finishing touches on a copper sculpture, which hangs from the ceiling to the floor.

### See artists at work

Silicon Valley Open Studios artists on the coast will be opening their doors from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on May 21 and 22. Here are those in the city. For a full list, visit [svos.org](http://svos.org).

Sue Bolton, 285 Poplar St., Half Moon Bay  
Jennifer Clark, 2850 Lobitos Creek Road, Half Moon Bay  
Susan Friedman, 2850 Lobitos Creek Road, Half Moon Bay  
Anne Grannis, 604 Main St., La Piazza, Half Moon Bay  
Barbara Grauke, 604 Main St., La Piazza, Half Moon Bay  
Rebecca Holland, 2800 Lobitos Creek Road, Half Moon Bay  
Lisa Kairos, 342 Filbert St., Half Moon Bay  
Amanda Krauss, 285 Poplar St., Half Moon Bay  
Carl Mehler, 712 Toulouse Court, Half Moon Bay  
Kim Navarre, 604 Main St., La Piazza, Half Moon Bay  
Gail Schatz, 712 Toulouse Court, Half Moon Bay  
Ross Sheehan, 465 Third Ave., Half Moon Bay

time," said Sheehan. "When I'm done with the exhibition, I'll keep 10 or 20 and then just deconstruct the rest."

Deconstructing can be as simple as snipping out favored pieces of a canvas or mixing studio sweepings into oil paint.

"I work with a lot of wood and metal which generates dust," said Sheehan. "I actually mix the debris into oil paint to create texture."

The repurposed pigment is applied to canvas or wood in a manner Sheehan likens to icing a cake.

One piece, titled the "Volcano Eye," resembles white buttercream frosting with crushed Oreo cookie crumbs in the center. Regardless of interpretation, each layer and each paint chip has a bit of history.

"Art not always finished," he said. "And you don't always have to like a finished piece. In failure, there is a loss, but I can keep part of it and move on."

For more information on Sheehan's work, visit [rosssheehanart.com](http://rosssheehanart.com). HALF MOON BAY



In 2011 Sheehan began creating furniture/sculpture hybrids using wood, metal and found objects.

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