

Elizabeth Stevenson
Fisch Haus

Local artist Elizabeth Stevenson came to Wichita seeking new adventures and inspiration. Originally from Montreal, Canada, she was living in Paris, France when she spontaneously chose Kansas as her next destination. She came to the heartland in the late 90s on a whim hoping to experience the Wild West. Instead of finding cowboys, Indians and saloons, she unexpectedly discovered an arts community that became her home.

The first time Elizabeth walked into Fisch Haus, a gallery in the Commerce Street Arts District, her life changed. An empty warehouse transformed into a vibrant gallery, it was filled with artwork, music and art lovers enjoying original works by local artists.

"Having seen a poster in a coffee shop earlier that week for an art show downtown, I found myself one Friday night at the address on the poster - in front of a dark building in an abandoned warehouse district. Assuming I had gotten it wrong, I turned to leave when the front door flew open, light and sound poured out, and crowds of people convinced me that I was, to my surprise, in the right place. It was a life-changing experience."

From that point on, Elizabeth became immersed in the Wichita art scene. She was introduced to a supportive community of artists, including the founders of Fisch Haus, who were using the mixed-use building as not only their home, but as a shared maker space. Feeling a sense of belonging, Elizabeth joined Fisch Haus as a resident artist in 1999 and has been sharing her vision and passion with the local arts community ever since.

Through her work with Fisch Haus and the accompanying non-profit, Fisch Bowl, Elizabeth strives to provide a platform for local dreamers and doers to showcase their passions - everything from fashion, dance, music, theatre and more. She is also the driving force behind OpenStudios, a community initiative that partners with building owners to provide artists with free studio space in vacant storefronts.

"The artist gets the space for free and the property owners are able to enjoy an active space where a potential tenant could actually take a peek inside as they're walking by and see their own business in the space."

Learn more about Elizabeth's journey with Fisch Haus and OpenStudios by watching the video above.



Learn more: Fisch Haus



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