



Kerstin Pollack is on a mission to share her late husband's art.

EVERYDAY PEOPLE, B4

LOCAL

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EVERYDAY PEOPLE

Preserving the artist's way

Once her husband's muse, Kerstin Pollack keeps Reginald Pollack's memory and art alive by helping others see, listen, touch, taste, feel

BY JENNIFER LARSON
THE DESERT SUN

Kerstin Pollack is literally surrounded by art. The wife of the late American artist and sculptor Reginald Pollack and a native of Sweden, Kerstin Pollack was her husband's muse.

They married in 1974, after each had been married before. "He became much freer in his experience because I came into his life," Pollack said. "He opened up."

For her, too, the marriage was a blessing, a meeting of two souls. "This was wonderful," she said. "Fulfillment."

Reginald Pollack described their relationship as a triangle, a golden triangle comprised of God, man and woman. He often put gold triangles in his paintings, in tribute to his wife.

Now she is the curator of the thousands of pieces of artwork, the legacy of her husband, who died in 2001.

"I lived through each one," she said, picking up a small ceramic sculpture from the workbench in her husband's studio.

Dozens of oil paintings adorn the walls of her Palm Springs home: in the living room, in the bathrooms, in the bedrooms.

In the studio, there are too many vividly colored paintings to count, some stacked on shelves and others leaning up against walls.

"If I framed all of these, I would have to move out of here," Pollack said.

The transcendentalist writer Henry David Thoreau once wrote that he wanted to live deeply and suck out all the marrow of life.

Similarly, Pollack tries to live her life so that she uses all of her senses. She also wants to help others learn to open their eyes, listen, touch, taste and feel, too.

To that end, she works to spread the beauty, joy and spirituality of her husband's artwork by arranging for his art to be exhibited. "His message must be spread out there into the world," she said.

Pollack has cataloged her late husband's extensive collection and arranges shows in museums all over the country, like the one recently held at the Vincent Price Gallery and Art Museum



JAY CALDERON, THE DESERT SUN

Curator: Kerstin Pollack, widow of artist Reginald Pollack, is the curator of his works, which are displayed in museums all over the country. She makes her home in Palm Springs.

"He became much freer in his experience because I came into his life. He opened up."

Kerstin Pollack

About her late husband, the artist Reginald Pollack

in Los Angeles.

She is already planning to donate or exhibit many more pieces of his artwork.

Although Pollack does not paint or sculpt, she has her own method of helping others discover sensual experiences in nature.

She is a docent at The Living Desert in Palm Desert. She gives tours and talks to tour groups, especially groups of children. She shows them animals, encourages them to touch and smell lavender leaves and describe their feelings.

"I try to infuse in them a sense of the value of nature and to use all their senses," Pollack said.

Marcia Fisher, the Living Desert's public relations manager, said, "When children are around here, she just keeps them fascinated."

Pollack's mottos in life are "work hard, stay in love and be honest."

"The Living Desert fulfills the

"stay in love," she said. "Stay in love with nature."

Fisher describes Pollack as "a gentle soul, a highly intelligent woman and very passionate both about the Living Desert and her late husband's work."

"And she shares it," Fisher said. "She gave my husband and I two pieces, and I am so proud of them."

At 72, Pollack still has the long cornsilk blond hair that she had in the pictures of her and Reginald basking in the surf in Fire Island many decades ago.

She practices yoga three days a week and often entertains friends for dinner. She picks up rocks and stones, especially if they are triangular, and arranges them inside her house next to her husband's art.

She revels in the view of the craggy mountainside outside her full-length picture windows; she says she draws strength from the mountains.

Know someone the newspaper can profile for the **Everyday People** feature? Send your suggestions to reporter Jennifer Larson at 750 N. Gene Aubry Trail, Palm Springs, CA 92262; e-mail Jennifer.Larson@thedesertsun.com or fax 778-4654.



EVERYDAY PEOPLE from the past

Everyday People is a new feature highlighting Coachella Valley residents. The features will be collected on the newspaper's Web site so that you can read past stories at www.thedesertsun.com

She points to a spot by the window, the spot where she brought her husband home from a nursing home not long before he died, so he could watch the color of the sky rise and deepen behind the mountains. When he died, a friend spread his ashes on the hillside.

"His spirit is still here," she said, raising her hands, palms up.