

## Excerpt from "Six Art Friendly Towns"

By Jennifer Ball

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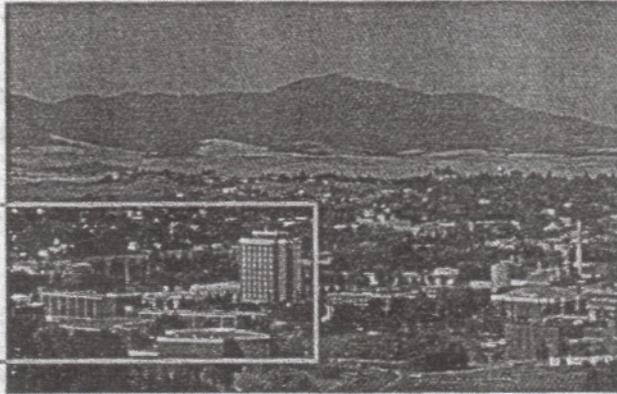
With a population of approximately 22,000 people—half of whom are students at the local university—Moscow, Idaho, is by no means a burgeoning metropolis. Nonetheless, Moscow's singular dedication to its art community has helped the city earn its reputation as "the heart of the arts."

Moscow has its share of art-related events, including the annual art walk, the young people's art festival and the Moscow farmers' market, which provides a local venue for musicians,

farmers, artists and craftspeople to sell their work. Home to the University of Idaho, Moscow pulls in fresh artistic talent every year with the university's impressive art program.

Elaine Greene was one such student. After earning a bachelor's degree in art, Greene decided to pursue a master's degree at the University of Idaho. "I was really impressed with the university's view of art processes," Greene says,

For more information about Moscow, Idaho, contact the Chamber of Commerce ([www.moscowchamber.com](http://www.moscowchamber.com), 800/380-1801).



"and the professors gave me a lot of freedom to pursue different media."

Greene graduated last year but enjoyed Moscow so much that she wanted to make her home there. "My husband and I both really liked the community," she explains. "You can ride bikes or walk just about anywhere you need to go, and then there's the university, which is always bringing in speakers and hosting interesting lectures or performances."

The local government's involvement in the city's art culture is even more impressive than the university's art program. Not only is there a city commission dedicated to Moscow's art scene, but there's also a government-supported art gallery, as well as a public arts ordinance to ensure that all building projects in the city dedicate one percent of their budget to an art-related venture.



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Deena Heath, director of the Moscow City Arts Department, says that this year the Moscow Arts Commission is proposing a public art task force, which will call for even more local art projects. This new task force is just one more way that the city communicates the important role art plays in the lives of its people. "I think," says Heath, "there were members of the community who were already active and who recognized that art is something they wanted to be part of Moscow."