

ARTS & CULTURE

Lady of Light a natural summertime choice

Louise Lambert to exhibit work at Alexis Art Gallery

By DOROTHY BROTHERTON
Westside Weekly

International artist Louise Lambert's work will be displayed throughout July at West Kelowna's Alexis Art Gallery.

Known as the Lady of Light for the way she works light into her paintings, Lambert maintains Wine Country Studios on Mission Hill, and has specialized in landscapes, particularly local vineyards and Okanagan Lake.

Now we're seeing more portraits by Lambert, especially in a series called Women and Wine. It's not really a new thing for her; Lambert was trained as a portrait artist.

"When I came to Canada, I found particularly in western Canada that not a lot of people wanted portraits," said Lambert.

Her husband, Marc Greenburg, suggested she paint vineyards, which are so much a part of this community. The result has been a succession of Okanagan scenes. One title called Autumn Kiss, featuring a vineyard with the eye led down the slopes to the lake, is a signature piece.

A newer painting, titled Beach Buddies, features four colourful Adirondack chairs arranged on the beach that seem to invite viewers to sit and visit. It's been swept up by Lambert fans.

Lambert still does landscapes, finding them a



DOROTHY BROTHERTON/Westside Weekly

"nice break from portraits," which are demanding. "Portraits have a lot more breadth and depth and I get a more emotional reaction," she added.

One that's had much emotional reaction shows a woman in a graceful red dress, her face somewhat obscured so you can imagine her to be anyone you want, and in the background is the Brandenburg Gate. It's titled La Femme Rouge. The piece conveys a spirit of intrigue and mystery.

One of Lambert's pieces in the Women and Wine series is headed to an art dealer in Dubai,

which could open new opportunities in that part of the world.

"These women are every woman at one point of time in their life, strong, pensive, playful, seductive and wise," said Lambert of the series.

When Lambert opened the current show at Alexis, she displayed a work commissioned by Karen and Brian Dickie, who came to claim their painting.

"When I saw how she does all the light I fell in love with her work," said Karen.

They wanted an additional painting for their

entrance, where they already have a depicting of a huge Western Canada forest recovering from pine beetle damage.

"Now I wanted something to show the lake and the fun of the Okanagan," said Karen. Lambert included kayaks in the painting because that's a favourite activity for Karen.

One detail didn't go over so well.

Lambert had painted a boathouse nearly surrounded by the water.

But the Dickies have just moved here from Calgary where there's been severe flooding, and didn't want to be reminded.

"Brian just wanted a shoreline," said Karen, so Lambert repainted that section to ensure the house was high and dry.

Alexis Art Gallery is owned and operated by Nicole Kelly and Devon McCubbin, and they're happy they made the move last year to 3466 Carrington, near the Best Western hotel.

"We get a lot of traffic here from Tim Hortons, and tourists from the hotel," said Kelly.

They display different artists each month, mostly local. Bobby Vandenhorn's work was there in June and Dale Dirks is coming in August.

Lambert will do another exhibit on Aug. 10, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Quails Gate Winery, called Is it the Okanagan or Tuscany?

On Aug. 17, she'll be doing Art in the Park at Rotary Beach on Gellatly Road, called Okanagan Captured in Paint, a Plein Aire collection by Lambert and selected artists.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Valley must protect its water

Pressures to spike demand for water dramatically by 2030

By JENNA HICKMAN
Special to Westside Weekly

Devastating floods in Alberta and a deluge in Toronto highlight the fact climate change is here, a climate change expert told Okanagan audiences on Wednesday.

However, flooding is not what we have to worry about.

The valley is "more likely to have other types of extreme weather, like deep and persistent drought," Robert Sandford, chairman of the Canadian Partnership Initiative in support of the United Nations Water for Life Decade, said. "The cost on society would be a tremendous impact on people."

The Okanagan is a semi-arid region with relatively low annual rainfall. The valley is more susceptible to drought in the rain shadow of the Coast Mountains.

Sandford, a member of the Adaptation to Climate Change Team at Simon Fraser University, recently co-authored a report on Canada's crop and food supply.

The report says with an increase in temperatures, efforts to monitor and protect groundwater should be made a high priority.

In addition, Sandford says B.C.'s Water Act should be modernized. The act is the principal law covering use and management of water here.

"What this report says is how important Water Act modernization is to your region," he said. "I really urge people from the Okanagan to press the government to advance this modernization."

"I think it's one of the most important things our Agriculture and Food Crops Climate Change Report would support."

Sandford said he believes the Okanagan uses far too much water, with 24 per cent going to residential landscapes.

If the Okanagan wishes to continue growing as it has, economically and agriculturally, there is no choice but to conserve water, he said.

The report predicts that by 2030, water demand will increase by 30 per cent and food and energy demand will spike by 50 per cent. This means much more food will have to be produced with much less water.

"What do you do when you have to make a choice between providing enough water for ecosystem protection that allows the life-support system to actually function and the hydrological cycle to work, and supplying enough water to feed people?" he asked.

It seems like a lose-lose situation; however, with guidance from what Sandford regards as one of the best water basin boards in the country, there is hope.

"I see the Okanagan as one of the places that can get this right and that can be a model for others elsewhere. You have the institutions like the Okanagan Basin Water Board in place. You understand how precious water is to you, as a society and the region. And I think you need to have help from your provincial government in modernizing water legislation in order to help you succeed," he said.



Sandford

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