Fine Arts

By Sharon Valchuis

Diverse Directions

Explore these worlds, from gilded tapestries to figurative and architectural photographs to experimental monoprints.

A special exhibition to be featured during the 1999 holiday season at Galerie Lafayette will include paintings, drawings, prints, photographs and ceramics by 10 women who either spent their formative years in Acadiana or who have adopted Acadiana as their home.

Titled "Diverse Directions: Works by Ten Women," the show features pieces by Janie Domingues Bayard, Bonnie Camos, Pegi Derby, Tim Frederick, Dottie Guilbeau, Emelie Annie Byrne Hebert, Mary Lenny Perrin, Joyce Bowie Scott, Claudia Roberts Trevithick and Debbie McCullough Wyatt.

"All" are artists who live and work throughout the region today, and the images they create bear witness to their wide-ranging interests and experiences—from the powerful influences of nature, of the lush and varied south Louisiana landscape, and of the unique history and heritage of this region, to personal struggle, and the celebration of life, beauty and the feminine spirit," says Galerie Lafayette Director Herman Mhire.

Painted tapestries and mixed media works on canvas are offered by Bayard, Lafayette resident and UL graduate. Her work was included in 1993 exhibition of south Louisiana artists presented in Nantes, Belgium; Paris and Grenoble, France.

Derby has turned her years of advertising design into fine and decorative arts and works primarily in acrylics and pastels. She has shown her work throughout the southeast including Houston, Baton Rouge, Atlanta and Seaside, Fla. Living and working in Lafayette, Derby is also an instructor at the Art Academy of Acadiana.

Guilbeau's study of the feminine spirit in Ghana through photography shows the female presence as an elemental force of life. Guilbeau is primarily a self-taught photographer who has worked in southern France, rural Wisconsin, French Catholic Louisiana and Hispanic Catholic New Mexico.

Wyatt paints in watercolor; her works are in the permanent collections such as The Ogden Collection in New Orleans, The State of Mississippi Collection in Jackson, The Deposit Guaranty Bank of Jackson, Premier Bank of Monroe and the Mississippi Museum of Art.

Hebert (Wyatt's daughter) works in watercolors and Raku ceramics and is showcased in permanent collections ranging from The White House in Washington, D.C., to the Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Miss.

Scott's experimental monoprints are in the collections of Carnegie Mellon, U.S. Steel, the Mellon Bank (all in Pittsburgh, Pa.); Tenneco in Houston; the Witte Memorial Museum of Dallas, and the Museo de Cuzamul in Quinamia Roo, Mexico, among others. Scott is a trustee of Carnegie Mellon University and has working studios in Lafayette: Beaver Creek, Colo., and Santa Fe, N.M.

Another member of the 10, Trevithick, is not only an artist but an art therapist.

"My painting has evolved from my Prayer Run Series to reflect a new process, one that opens the expression of feeling more directly," she says. "Where previously the inside of the 'carpet' frame contained an abstract image of feeling, my current paintings contain only the feeling, with no border or pattern.

"Painting this way relates to my work as an art therapist, and allows me to work through deeply personal issues," she adds. "I either start with a dream image or simply gesture with paint until the images appear. I paint with the intent to go where the painting leads me, asking only where I would go if I could really surrender to the process."

"I stand before my paper and let the images tell me what they need."

— Claudia Roberts Trevithick

The process Trevithick employs is, she believes, gender-specific, like the show in which it will be featured.

"I stand before my paper and let the images tell me what they need," she says. "I listen to my body, allow intuition rather than intellect to lead. It is a feminine process—receptive, intuitive, spontaneous, staying in the chaos. It is a process of risk—what will appear? Where will it take me? Can I paint it? Can I trust that my brush will know how? Can I put the critic aside and just trust the process?"

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