

Paper Trails

Written by Editor

Tuesday, 01 September 2009 07:18

The Art League of Hilton Head Gallery is pleased to present Paper Trails by Barbara F. Bothwell opening with an artist reception on September 15, 5-7pm at the Art league's Gallery, Suite 207, in Pineland Station Mall. The exhibit continues through October 10th. The public is cordially invited.



Barbara Bothwell is back with a splash on the Hilton Head art scene. Her unique fashion of working with paper started some 40 years ago, and she has never tired of it.

Drawn to art as a child, she was told that if she wanted to make art in her parents' home "it better not make a mess!" And so, she discovered her medium of paper and taught herself collage. Over the years she has successfully fine-tuned her fascinating and unique process. Bothwell finds inspiration in everyday life from items in her home to international news editorials. Artistically, her biggest influences derived from Byzantine mosaics, the Impressionist usage of color and Cezanne's interpretation of nature through the use of the cube, cone and cylinder.



One of her largest pieces immediately demands your full attention as Three Afghan Women walk toward you in their deep-blue burkas. This compelling content and powerful composition will certainly be a conversation piece. My favorite work is Rug Market, which features great reds, browns, blues and a jewel-like floor pattern. Here, the collage perfectly blends into a seamless whole. In Daffodil Pickers, Bothwell revisits a favorite, local subject matter as she colorfully depicts women harvesting daffodils at a farm once located in Bluffton. Skillfully executed landscapes, seascapes, animal portraits, figures and still lifes round out a remarkable showcase of Bothwell's art.

Bothwell works with two kinds of paper. One is hand-made, which she paints the desired colors then tears and cuts to create the necessary shapes. The other is found paper coming from printed materials such as magazines. To begin, she uses mostly torn pieces of solid color akin to tesserae in a mosaic. She then incorporates textured colors to reflect a transition from one color to another, such as is found in fold of fabric or a shadow. Preserving the color on the front with an acrylic medium, Bothwell also strips the back of some papers using water and various abrasive instruments. This manipulation of the paper allows her more latitude in the image. She especially loves the texture and depth she can achieve through this intricate process.

