



Clockwise from left: Christine Drummond's works *Celebrating Rio*; *Plumas e Serpentina*; and *Windy Seashore*.

unmistakeably Brazilian. Up close they are textured but step back and they snap into focus, depicting scenes from daily life at the beach, market, carnival or *favelas*. She says she depicts group scenes because "I believe in the power of people working together to do something good; we need to be together to make things happen," she says. "Plus, it makes things more alive."

The vibrant colours are also a considered choice. "When people see my paintings, I want them to

want to be part of it. I want them to feel happy. If one day you are a little sad and you look at one of my paintings and you feel better, you smile, then it's good," she beams. Indeed, she takes a great deal of pleasure in her daily painting sessions, often accompanied by the heady sounds of the *samba*, *axé* or *lambada*. "I turn on my Brazilian music very loud and I paint and sing along and dance."

Drummond, who first picked up a paintbrush in 2000, says she wants people, especially women, to see her as an example of someone who followed her passions. "As soon as I started painting I realised that was what I wanted to do with my life. It was inside me and I really thought that I needed to be optimistic about it and one day I would be a well-known painter, because I believed that was my path," she remembers. "I was almost 40 years old, raising my kids, and I thought that was my life. Then I discovered painting and here I am, becoming a well-known artist, so women need to know that they have to believe in their dreams." **AS**

Carnivale runs until March 17. Visit www.butlergoodegallery.com for details.



ART

Florence Biennale, has always wanted to see the carnival, so decided this would be the next best thing. "You get the feel of dance and music from her work ... and get a good feel of what South America and its lifestyle are all about."

Born and raised in Rio, Drummond is now based in Indianapolis and, although she often visits, misses Brazil. "That's why I paint it," she says. I am Brazilian, a *carioca* [Rio local]. That is what I want to show through my paintings."

Her brightly coloured oils, all carefully layered and sculpted with a palette knife, are

BLAME IT ON RIO

Oh, to be in Rio de Janeiro for the *carnaval*. The energy, the music, the vibrant colours. For those who can't make it, Rio comes to Sydney this month with an exciting exhibition of Brazilian artist Christine Drummond's work at the Butler Goode Gallery. Gallery director Katy Richfield-Goode, who discovered Drummond at the

Left: Corcovado offers unrivalled views. **Below:** the *caipirinha*, Brazil's favourite drink. **Far right:** Prainha beach.

CHRISTINE DRUMMOND'S RIO

The artist shares her tips on where to go and what to do in her hometown.

Must-visit bars

"In Rio, I would take you to a little bar, a *botequim*, for happy hour. Bracarene in Leblon is one of the best for a cold beer with Brazilian appetisers. People go after the beach on a weekend. It's fun, casual and very *carioca*, so you won't see too many tourists."

Must-visit restaurants
"For the best meat, there is no better place than Porcão Rio's in Flamengo. It's a *churrascaria* (steakhouse) that serves meat on an all-you-can-eat basis. The meat is wonderful and served on big skewers. The salad buffet is also incredible and you can

enjoy the views of Pão de Açúcar (Sugarloaf Mountain). A great place to try *feijoada*, a traditional Brazilian dish, is the Caesar Park Hotel on Ipanema Beach. It is served for lunch and it's delicious."

Must-do nightlife

"I would take you dancing at my favourite club, Carioca da Gema, in the Lapa area. Also I would suggest seeing a samba school rehearsal to get the flavour of Rio carnival's atmosphere."

Must-see art galleries

"A great place is Centro Cultural do Banco do Brasil. Until 1989 this downtown building was the headquarters of Brazil's national bank, but it is now an important cultural centre. There are small galleries showing ever-changing exhibits on art and culture."



Must-see landmarks

"You can't go to Rio without seeing the Corcovado and its beautiful view of the city. From there, go to Pão de Açúcar. Don't miss Floresta da Tijuca, the tropical forest in the city, with the Mesa do Imperador and Vista Chinesa for great views."

Must-go beaches

"My favourite beach is Prainha ("little beach"). It's amazing – take a day trip, and enjoy grilled fish or *gamba* shrimps at the only restaurant. And don't forget to try Brazil's famous drink *caipirinha* – you will love it."

