

Visual Arts



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Local painter making waves south of the border

Darlene Adams will show her work at prestigious New York gallery

By Kevin Maimann/EXAMINER STAFF
Posted 1 month ago

A lot of funny terms are tossed around in art circles. Some are strange, some a touch pretentious. Others are downright ridiculous.

When the prestigious Agora Gallery in New York City decided to display a series by local painter Darlene Adams, its directors spent an hour and a half coming up with this doozy to describe her work ...

"They all it oil-saturated, semi-expressionistic, abstract landscape art," Adams says with a laugh.

The gallery scene is a strange and wonderful world for Adams, who just got the news that Agora will display her work for a year starting in February, and that she'll do a show there in October.

Adams also represented Edmonton on the international scene with a show at the high-end Artists Alley Gallery in San Francisco last year.

“When I start painting, I get so involved that it could be seven or eight hours.”

It's something she's slowly starting to get used to. Adams never took art classes – though she taught one in California last year - and she only started painting seriously in 2001.

"A lot of people would compare me to Emily Carr or Group of Seven and these kind of things, and the funny thing is, I didn't know who these people were," Adams says. "I had heard of Emily Carr but I'd never heard of the Group of Seven before."

Her unique, vibrant style of oil painting was born from her love of travelling. Most of her pieces are inspired by unique places she has visited – from the southern U.S. to Europe, to Africa.

A resident of the north-west Athlone community, Adams graduated from Victoria school with a commercial arts degree but put painting on the backburner for years while she raised her son and ran a business with her husband.

When she sold five paintings at her first art show, she knew she had something special.

Adams now paints full time, spending hours each day to complete a new piece every five weeks.

"I don't time myself," she says. "When I start painting, I get so involved that it could be seven or eight hours."

Her son now lives in California with his wife and two children, making it easier for Adams to visit on artistic vacations to the American west coast.

Adams is thrilled with the opportunity to immerse herself the world of high-end galleries and art aficionados who praise – and most importantly, purchase – her work.

"I love to see people's faces when they see my work, and when they buy one, because I know they are getting a good home," she says.

A member of the Edmonton Arts Council and CARFAC (Canadian Artists Representation), Adams has pieces displayed in homes throughout North America and as far away as New Zealand.

Her Vibrant Earth series is currently on display at Twisted Fork, 11162 82 Ave., until the end of the month, and will move to Mudhoney Salon, 10838 124 St., in February.

Her dream, which seems more attainable by the day, is to eventually settle down as an artist in Europe.

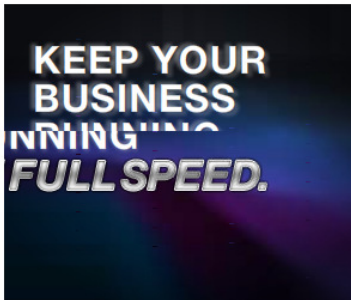
"My goal is actually to be painting in Paris," she says. "Someday."

For examples of her work, visit artwerksbydarlene.com.

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Edmonton painter Darlene Adams displays a work from her Vibrant Earth series at Twisted Fork on Whyte Avenue last week.



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