

Nashua artist goes worldwide

Abstracts on display in Pepperell

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Nineteen years after his death, Dominique Boutaud's father was still teaching her about life and art.

Boutaud, a Nashua artist who was born in Nice, France, was exhibiting her work last February at the Gallery "Maison de l'Amerique Latine de Monaco" in Monaco. Boutaud was introduced to the gallery through her friendship with Dr. Helene Day, Consul of Monaco, Emeritus, who is based in Boston. Boutaud's abstract paintings hung in the second floor of the gallery, which had marble floors and ornate sculptures. But for some reason, Boutaud's eyes were attracted to a metal ash tray that was functional yet unique. When she leaned over to read the small plaque, she discovered the ash tray had been made by her father, Adrien Lepori.

"I felt welcome by him in the building," Boutaud said.

She had received an informal education in the arts from her father while growing up in France. Boutaud said he would take her outdoors and show her the light and shadows in the trees and the two took a sort of pilgrimage across France stopping at various churches and devouring their paintings, architecture and frescoes.

"I spent many afternoons and evenings drawing with him," Boutaud said.

Yet it wasn't until Boutaud moved to Texas that she took her first classes in drawing, watercolor and oil painting after she studied English at Rice University. In Texas, her third and youngest son was born and when her kids were in school she had more free time to explore art. But she wouldn't find her signature — her works in abstract — until 1996 while living in Massachusetts. By this time her father had already passed away, but his influence was never far from Boutaud's mind.

"Before I would often do still life," Boutaud said. "I wanted to express myself differently."

Nine months after doing her first abstract painting, Boutaud was accepted to participate in an show in Nice. To her surprise, her booth was filled with eager fans.

"My career started there," Boutaud said.

Since then it has taken off. Boutaud has exhibited in Italy, Spain, China, Japan and other places. Her travels have taught her that humans anywhere in the world all share a love of beauty.

"I feel fortunate to have been able to exhibit my paintings in other countries," Boutaud said.



"The Launch" by Dominique Boutaud.

While she is in demand around the world — she recently participated in the Anniversario Dell'Unita d'Italia at the Accademia Severiade in Milan — she creates her work in her studio in the Picker Building in Nashua with a view of the river. She said she was fortunate, as she has many other artists on the floor where she works and they are able to talk together and bounce ideas off each other.

"We are like a community," Boutaud said. "It is different than working alone."

Yet it is from within that Boutaud's best ideas come, although she never knows when they will strike. She said she might be at the market when suddenly she is inspired and she'll have to go paint. She paints quickly because she is trying to express something. Other times she will feel the need to paint, even though she doesn't know what the painting will be because the idea comes from somewhere else.

"When I paint I really concentrate," Boutaud said. "I am in the zone."

Boutaud said in her paintings she tries to express her feelings in a way that makes the viewers feel as if it has come from them. Boutaud said a person once told her that within one of Boutaud's abstract paintings she could see a woman. Boutaud looked closer and realized subconsciously she had painted herself into the work. Sometimes it is difficult to separate life from art.

Locally, Boutaud's work will be on display April 30 through June 3 at the Lawrence Library Art Gallery, 15 Main St., Pepperell, Mass., www.lawrencelibrary.org, 978-433-0330.