

Mark Holmes
Springbank
Art Centre
Mississauga



Painter Whitemore flying solo

By MARK HOLMES
Staff

Make no mistake about it, Wendy Whitmore is a Canadian painter, albeit a Canadian painter with diverse tastes and interests.

Working almost exclusively in water based media, Whitmore translates her passion for flora to canvas. Rich traditional textiles, ethnic facial features and striking landscapes have also brought about a deluge of inspiration that can be seen at her annual solo exhibition this weekend — Friday, Saturday and Sunday — at Mississauga's Springbank Art Centre.

A graphic designer and illustrator whose experience in commercial art spanned two decades, Whitmore decided nine years ago to leave Europe and return to Canada, resuming a full time love affair with her paint brushes and watercolors.

Whitemore believes her growth as an artist is intrinsically linked with experimentation.

PEEL BIOGRAPHY

WHITEMORE, Wendy

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"There's a lot of observing, thinking and exploration. As I attempt to explore new directions (artistic) growth occurs naturally," says Whitmore, describing her learning process.

To observers of her work, there might be a niggling familiarity to some of her paintings — paintings that reflect her interpretation of the Niagara Escarpment in Milton or, perhaps, of the British Columbia coastline in Pacific Rim National Park.

"As an environmentalist, naturalist and a birder, many of my paintings will reflect that," she says.

Further afield, Whitmore indulges her passion for the textiles, features and cultures of indigenous people.

In her latest collection, a fully costumed Moroccan woman gazes from one canvas while a Japanese Geisha looks demurely away from the viewer.

The Moroccan woman's brilliantly colored costume and make-up fight for dominance and the Geisha's silk kimono shows a deft touch and patience for detail.

Meanwhile, her floral works are growing bolder.

"They're a study in beauty, fragility and strength," she says.

Whitemore graduated with honors from Toronto's Central Technical School after studying under renowned artists Doris McCarthy and Charles Goldhammer. Subsequent studies also found her working under watercolor master Zoltan Szabo.

In 1980, Whitmore began teaching with the Ottawa Board of Education. She has conducted numerous watercolor workshops and, since 1989, she has been teaching with the McMichael Canadian Art Collection in Kleinburg, Ontario.

Whitemore's work can be viewed at Springbank Art Centre, 3057 Mississauga Rd. N. Nov. 4-6 from 1 - 5 p.m.

For information call 274-0345.