



Sandboe continues with artistic 'Journey'

DEBI RUHL/ENCORE!

Suzanne Sandboe is taking a journey through her past and hopes others will join her for the adventure.

Drawing on the familiar places from her youth, Sandboe is reliving moments of her life through art in "Journey," a new show at the Prairie Art Gallery that will feature 25 of the local artist's watercolour paintings.

"This show is a collection of recent watercolour paintings, the majority of which are wilderness landscapes," she said. "Growing up, my family took many trips each year to wilderness areas south and west of Grande Prairie, mainly to the Kakwa and Kinuso Falls areas. These areas and the pleasures they evoke became ingrained in my spirit over the years. This show is about the places we used to go and the places we still go. A remote fishing hole, a mountain stream or a set of falls were our destination ... to find that perfect peaceful spot to enjoy nature. I find myself, as an adult, drawn back to these familiar places. I relive the journeys of the past as I endeavour to capture them in art."

Nearly all of the paintings that will be on display have been completed since Christmas but Sandboe said a couple of them were finished in 2003. Although she doesn't like to talk about how long each painting has taken her to complete, each scene is different and requires a certain amount of time to get it just right.

"I tend to do only one at a time and then I can focus just on that. I definitely prefer to work that way but I do like a variety so I don't get stuck doing just one thing. I've been painting for a lot of years," she said.

Now an artist full-time, Sandboe has worked in a variety of mediums for the past 25 years but now concentrates mainly on watercolours as she enjoys the "spontaneous

and suggestive nature" of the paints.

However, she has dabbled in oils and continues to work with airbrushing and does some mural work. Off of the watercolour canvas, her most recent project has been completing the backdrops for this year's Festival of Trees at the Crystal Centre.

Mainly self-taught, she has attended local workshops and the Red Deer College Summer Series Art Program in addition to conducting several workshops of her own. She is a member of the Alberta Society of Artists, president of the Peace Watercolour Society and is an active member of the Prairie Art Gallery.



Artist Suzanne Sandboe's show will include works such as Journey to the Red Deer (above)

While the current exhibit features landscapes, she admits she enjoys painting a "huge variety" of subjects, including people, horses and buildings.

Her work is represented by the Unique Gallery in Grande Prairie, the Front Gallery in Edmonton, the Small Gallery in Beaverlodge and in her home studio.

"I feel that art is an expressive connection between the artist and viewer. It's a way to communicate one's vision and understanding of a way of life, place

or situation," she said. "Through my art I try to share my personal love and appreciation for my surroundings and my paintings are often said to portray a tranquil, peaceful and reflective feeling. I feel my approach to art is honest and realistic. I paint what I enjoy and endeavour to share with the viewer what inspires me to create."

Sandboe's "Journey" will be on display at the Prairie Art Gallery beginning with an opening reception on Oct. 22 at 7:30 p.m.