



→ Ignited, acrylic on canvas, by Patricia Langevin.

Abstract painter guided by sense of joy, bold colours

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→ Bright, bold colours, broad strokes, thick, rippling texture and a passion for the natural world all mark work by Canmore abstract painter Patricia Langevin.

Langevin is opening a solo show called Ignited: Paintings from the Imagination at the Banff Public Library on Friday (Sept. 7), with a reception from 7-9 p.m. The show will hang until Sept. 30.

Langevin's contemporary abstract paintings are rooted in the outdoors, where she finds her inspiration. But rather than reproduce what she sees in front of her, be it landscape or specific elements found in nature, such as wood grain, Langevin works quickly and intuitively, as she attempts to capture a "feeling."

"I like bold textures and colours and I like to use that to create different moods or emotions or feelings. I like bright colours because I think it brings joy in our lives and in our spaces and what I try to portray is some positive emotions," Langevin said Aug. 28.

"I use things I have absorbed that have some meaning to me, like landscapes, but I like landscapes that are free flowing. I try not to constrain myself too much and just be free and let it flow and see if my vision is going to work," she said.

Through that, she strives to create paintings that are open, allowing viewers to make their own discoveries.

"What I love about abstract is anybody can have a different perspective of what it represents. I'm always surprised because I have an idea of what I think the painting is, but I try not to tell others what I think and I just listen to their interpretation. I'm always amazed at what people's interpretation is. So, having different interpretations of a painting is what is really appealing to me," she said.

Langevin, a self-taught artist, began painting five years ago. She took a community course in figurative painting, but knew even then she was drawn to abstract.

After taking an abstract painting course at the Alberta College of Art and Design in Calgary, Langevin began taking workshops with established abstract painters in Vancouver and Calgary.

The title of the show, Ignited – also the name of one of the paintings that will be on display – reflects how abstract painting "ignited" her imagination.

"It's like a light bulb went off," she said.

Langevin, a member of the Canmore Art Guild (CAG), also credits a supportive artistic community for providing motivation and encouragement, allowing her to move forward as a painter.

She continues to take workshops to learn new techniques and refine current ones. She also purposefully gives herself time between courses to create opportunities to experiment and make her own discoveries and mistakes.

"Sometimes I have to stop the learning process and experiment on my own. I've made some discoveries about how I like to work and what works for me," she said.

"Experimentation allows me to make mistakes and discover what works and what doesn't. It's what makes me grow. I learn and I grow and I just know it is part of the process of painting. I'll build on those threads on other paintings and apply it to different paintings because I've made those mistakes and that has been a good learning experience for me."

Langevin begins a painting with an acrylic texture, such as gel or modeling paste, applying it freely and loosely, letting her intuition be her guide.

"I try not to be too concerned with what it is going to look like in the beginning, but something that I like," she said. Once the initial layer dries, Langevin begins to apply the paint.

And the effect is striking, especially landscapes that have just enough distinct details to suggest a place, but are still abstract and indistinct enough to allow viewers to connect to their own places and spaces through the work.

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