

AUSTRALIAN ARTIST FINDS FRESH INSPIRATION IN COLORADO LIGHT

By Ken Lutes -
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Expressionist landscape artist Danielle Hatherley with one of her paintings on display at Westward Gallery.

“Everything is part of the one”

BERKELEY — “In life, we have moments that we try and grasp but are gone like that.” With a snap of her fingers, Danielle Hatherley evinces the essence of “Fleeting

Moments,” her newest art exhibit of expressionist landscapes, showing through September 26, 2017 at Westward Gallery, 4400 Tennyson St.

“Our lives are made up of fleeting moments,” Hatherley says. “We try to hold on to moments and memories, yet time and our own minds blur our vision. In my Fleeting Moment series I am trying to capture intangible moments that I see in the landscape.” She says that most of her paintings initiate from the landscape—afternoon sky, clouds and light she sees out of her studio window. Vibrant light in her Colorado sky paintings seems to burst through clouds, shattering the darkness—that’s the effect she tries to capture.

“Everything is part of the one,” Hatherley says. “I’m trying to merge everything—you know, the clouds, the water, the sky and whatever’s in it; they’re all interconnected. To me, to paint them as separate, disparate items is contradictory to the whole of what a landscape’s about.” She pointed out a place on one of her paintings where those components merge.

On a tour of her work through the gallery, Hatherley took out a few of her reference materials. On one sheet was an image that had caught her attention while watching a video. She had stopped the TV and snapped a photo of the screen image. “I wanted to explore it further,” she said. Comparing that image to the painting on the gallery wall, she said, “As you can see, I make color changes and detail changes. I wasn’t trying to match the photograph, because if you try to match the photograph to the nth degree, you just set yourself up for stress and restrictions.”

Indicating an area of another painting, she said, “When you let little accidents happen, they’re often the best parts of the painting.” She said that while other artists might be inclined to tidy up, she left it the way it was. “The parts that are courageous are the best parts, too.” She then referred to a bold splash of white paint accentuating light penetrating through clouds.

Plein air painting ignited passion for painting

Hatherley was born in Albury, a country town in Australia, and raised in Sydney. After two years in art school, she met and apprenticed with renowned Australian painter Ted Blackall, who would become her mentor.

She started out painting traditional landscapes, like Monet, Renoir, Van Gogh—“those guys were my first inspiration.” When she was 19, Blackall took her out plein air painting (painting outdoors), and that’s what really ignited her passion for painting.

“Some may see leaving art school without a degree as a shocking thing to do, yet what I learned from my two years working with Ted Blackall I never could have learned in art school.”

Hatherley moved to upstate New York in 2001, then to New York City in 2007, where she founded The Plein Air Painting School (thepleinairpaintingschool.com). There, she took people on outdoor painting adventures around the city to noted landmarks such as

Times Square, Central Park, Wall Street and Soho. It became a successful business but left her with little time for her own art and career.



Artist Danielle Hatherley puts finishing touches on a "Fleeting Moments" painting.

Moving to Colorado in 2014 marked a major transition in her work. "It seems there has been a synergy of sorts, in moving from a city that is compact and congested to the expansive state of Colorado." In New York, she painted more intimate, earth-toned scenes. Since arriving in Colorado, she says she feels more compelled to include blues and greens in her palette.

Paintings vibrant with energy

Hatherley said Blackall told her that the eye looks all around a painting, searching for a resting place that he called the "hero point." She says a lot of artists' paintings don't have that "finalé," or hero point. "You've got to have it; otherwise, it's almost like the piece doesn't have a purpose for being. My hero points are very literal, but you don't have to be doing a blast of light to have a hero point. I mean, it could be one of Rembrandt's figures, where the light is hitting just on the side of the face, and that's the hero point.

“When I look at light from behind a dark object, such as a cluster of trees, I see a wrestling between light and dark. I see this as a metaphor for life and this world of opposites in which we reside—one of good and evil, happy and sad, yin and yang, and light and dark, etc.

“All these elements are constantly in flux, constantly at odds, yet ironically in need of each other as a counterpoint. In the landscape, that energy-filled moment where light and dark are forced to unify and seemingly find peace—this is what possesses me to paint.”

“Fleeting Moments” runs through September 26, 2017. For more information on Danielle Hatherley and the exhibit:

Westward Gallery | 4400 Tennyson St | 720-483-1046

westwardgallery.com | daniellehatherley.com

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