

“Spring Into Spring”

Pacifica Art Connection group exhibit

By Donna M. Doney

Upon entering Quarry Cove Art Gallery in Rockaway Beach, one is splashed with vibrant colors as spring is symbolized as new life in the form of nature bursting with energy. Leo Leon's "Pacifica Hummingbird" entices with a side-view glare as one makes eye contact with the stunning bird. The photographer zooms in to the detailed feathers, which generates a feeling of softness. Leon's "Purple Dahlia" and "Orchid on Maiden Hair" are reminders of the physical world's most effervescent and dynamic florals. These photos stimulate the senses and leave us hoping for the warm weather and brilliant shades of spring.

The enchantment continues with Donna Doney's "Hot Cocoa," a deep red Pacifica rose taken up close and with great care as not to disturb the gentleness of the flower. One can almost smell the sweet aroma of the velvety petals. In contrast, Doney's "Floral Fantasy" has an abstract constitution. The type of flower is in question and implies a streak of fun and imagination. There's a mix of fantasy and realism playing off these two photographs. Using canvas, Doney creates a painterly textured feel to her work.

Josie Johansen's photographs represent spring in a different light. "Princeton Harbor at Dusk" is peaceful and serene as one reflects on the calming waters of the bay. "Withered Tranquility" by Johansen is also soothing as winter ends and we contemplate the resurrection that the new season brings. The tree captured in the photo stands as a monument to strength and stature throughout all of nature's changes.

Glass artist Karen Rosenstein expresses the season with "My Grandmother's Rose Garden," a fused, heart-shaped glasswork alluding to a childhood memory. The scattered colors reflect the many different rose bushes in her grandmother's garden. We are reminded of a flower's strength with the addition of wire, which represents the canes and thorns of the plant. In contrast, Rosenstein's "CA Fantasy" is a crocheted and latch-hooked, mixed-media hanging exemplifying the fanciful notion of a perfect green lawn big enough for a riding mower in California. Imagination, creativity, and humor are combined in this interesting creation.

Browsing through the gallery, we notice Margaret Welsh's use of green in her acrylic painting "Pacifica Park Trail." The pathway, surrounded by thriving trees and bushes, is calming and restful. A lone bench on the trail is inviting and lightens the mood in this pleasing environment. In contrast to Welsh's realism, Larry Rosenstein's photo "Candy Cane Petals" is an abstract representation of nature. Upon closer inspection, we discover the linear pink stripes are petals of an unknown flower in an interesting composition.

Using the familiar shape of the seashell, sculptor Cindy Chan uses repeated curves and lines to create gracefulness in "Shell Bouquet with Bird." The sculpture provides an ah-ha moment of recognition when viewed up close. The dove-like bird perched atop harkens to hope and peace. The sculpture is merged with pastel colors to reflect the essence of spring. Similarly, Judy Quitoriano's ceramic piece "Life's Twists and Turns" has a cheerful palette. The sculpture meanders and undulates, as we contemplate its possible meaning of life changing direction but ending well.

Textile artist Anne Puski's "Tulips" brims with the energy and life of spring. The shape of the petals in this work evokes an intense, flame-like feeling and a passion for the season. The deep hues of crimson in "Red Poppy" repeat the theme of vibrancy and have the viewer wanting more. We find more vitality as Victor Carmichael wows us with his exuberant colors in "Pedro Pt. Color Splash." Hanging at the top of the stairs in the gallery, we are drawn upward for a closer look. The intense, raging oranges and reds reflect the beautiful Pacifica sunsets that we all have experienced.

Love and appreciation for nature are beyond question with this PAC group exhibit. The artists have created an array of artwork that is energetic and simultaneously tranquil and soothing. After a long, rainy winter, we are pleasantly awakened to a display of exciting paintings, sculptures, textiles, and photography by Pacifica Art Connection members. Meet the artists of PAC for good conversation and refreshments on Saturday, March 30 between 2 and 4 p.m. Quarry Cove Art Gallery is at 225 Rockaway Beach Avenue next to Avani Salon in Pacifica. "Spring Into Spring" runs until Saturday, April 27.