

OKANAGAN WINE FESTIVALS FEATURES LOCAL ARTISTS

The Okanagan Valley is classic wine country. Its sweeping vistas of lush vineyards blanketing hillsides overlooking blue lake waters have inspired winemakers who have found the secret of the terroir and have made the region justly famous for its wines.

The scenery and relaxed atmosphere found here have also inspired artists who look to capture some of that magic in paint on canvas.

Glenda MacQuarrie and Lizann Allan have taken that inspiration and managed to reflect the very essence of the Okanagan and its vibrant wine culture to their work.

But, according to Kelowna-based MacQuarrie, wine and fine art just naturally go together.

Okanagan Wine Country is Perfect Inspiration

"I see the wineries and vineyards as part of the whole landscape, with the lake and the trees and the hills and the skies," said MacQuarrie. "I see it as all connected."

"And where we live is so fabulous ... I hope my paintings evoke a lasting emotion and sensation, just like good wine does."

With such bounty found right here in the Okanagan, MacQuarrie said she's also a big fan of the local wines.

"I have a particular fondness for Icewine and the pairing of wine with food," she added. "That's really such a part of our culture here."

Each year local artists are highlighted at the Spring and Fall Okanagan Wine Festivals, with their work shown in the printed Okanagan Wine Festivals Guide,



"Vineyard Vantage" Glenda MacQuarrie represented by Picture Perfect

available at local wineries, VQA shops, and BC Liquor Stores among other locations across the Valley, as well as at several events as part of the festivals themselves. MacQuarrie and fellow artist Lizann Allan are the two artists who will be featured in 2013 — and rightfully so.

Although both moved here from elsewhere — MacQuarrie grew up in Vancouver and has travelled the world, while Allan was born in Malaysia and raised in Scotland — they have made the Valley their home and take great inspiration from the landscapes they feature so prominently in their work.

"I've been painting for about 15 years," said Allan. "And I enjoy that Okanagan landscapes and vineyards and orchards lend themselves to landscape painting."

"That's very appealing to me. It's colourful, seasonal and it's beautiful and very inspiring."

She was a featured Okanagan Wine Festivals artist in 2010 and is a member of the Kelowna Painters Studio Society. She is also active with a painting group at Kelowna's Rotary Centre for the Arts, and like MacQuarrie, has been painting in the Okanagan for some time.

Her sensuous painting captures an image of a vineyard under a mantle of fall colours and graces pages four and five of the upcoming Fall Festival Guide.

She too feels there's something of a connection between wine and art.

"I like wine and I like art, so it's a great combination," she said.

"And I like paintings that make people happy, so I try to do that in my work."

While Allan's evocative fall image, called "After the Harvest," is in acrylic, MacQuarrie's captures a different scene in a different media. Her unique oil on dark background painting technique allows her to layer highlights where she needs, to bring to the canvas the essence of the Okanagan light perfectly.

Her featured image is of a vineyard leading down to a blue Okanagan Lake in the middle ground with rolling hills in the background over the far shore of the lake.

Her personality is reflected in the work. With its splash of colours, ranging from delicate greens to rich purple hues, it perfectly captures the beauty of the Okanagan and the romance of grapes and wine.

MacQuarrie said the scene is really her vision of what it feels like to be right there, and it is — you can almost feel the warmth and smell the vines.

"Often there's just one little thing that inspires you to want to paint something and that was one of those days that was just perfect," she said. "Calm, serene but yet a gorgeous feel to the landscape."

Besides having her work featured in the Spring Okanagan Wine Festival Guide, she will also be in attendance, showcasing her art, as well as some of Allan's, at both nights of the popular Westjet Wine Tastings May 3 and 4 at the Rotary Centre for the Arts in Kelowna.

As well, both artists are represented at the Picture Perfect Gallery on Bernard Avenue in Kelowna, and MacQuarrie will also be featured when it plays host to the Wine Tasting is an Art event May 4 from 12 to 5 p.m.

For more information on the artists, go to www3.telus.net/glendamacquarrie and www.lizannart.com.

For more information on the 2013 Spring and Fall Okanagan Wine Festivals and art-oriented events, go to www.thewinefestivals.com



"After the Harvest" Lizann Allan represented by Picture Perfect