

Creative Spaces

Visit North Shore Artists in their Studios

Belinda Bruce



All My Love, Too by Olivia Creighton

Olivia Creighton

In order to create there must be a dynamic force, and what force is more potent than love? –Igor Stravinsky

While Valentine's Day may have become an overblown commercialization of romance, at the core, it's still a celebration of love. In these increasingly disturbing times, marked by violence and mistrust, we need reminders of love's power to heal and transform. After 9/11, artist Olivia Creighton felt that focusing on positive sentiments would be a good antidote to the troubled atmosphere. "I felt overwhelmed by the constant bombardment of negative and complex images. I chose the theme to contrast all of the darkness: Love is all you need."

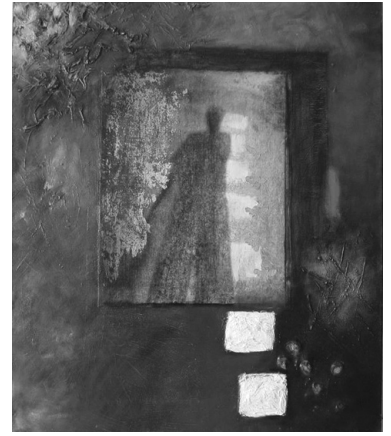
Olivia studied art at Ecole Des Beaux Art in Montreal under Arthur Lismer of the Group of Seven. She moved to Vancouver and completed her studies at the Vancouver School of Art, now Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design. Drawing on the "healing creativity and amazing folklore" of her Irish roots, Olivia creates rich, colourful imagery abounding with magical creatures, flowers, song and music. Over the last few years, in her basement studio, Olivia has produced a series about love in its many incarnations. The vibrancy and dancing movement of her work reflects a desire "to awaken the love that abides in our hearts."

Many works in the series including *The Food of Love*, *Melodie D'Amour*, *All You Need is Love* and *Speak to Me of Love* capture the buoyant, joyous feeling of caring for another. She describes her work as "whimsical and human." With her long, multi-hued hair and bright eyes, Olivia is a spritely embodiment of her work.

Other work includes *French Reveries*, a series revelling in the French countryside, following her recent travels to France. She is now working on a series of miniature canvases and teaching workshops at the Silk Purse Gallery.

WHO: Olivia Creighton

WHERE: Her studio, 604.984.8740



The Shadow by Joan Skeet

Joan Skeet

For many of us, a new year signals fresh starts and new directions. For Joan Skeet, it's time to showcase new work resulting from a recent sense of rebirth. Creator and instructor of an innovative art program for elderly and Alzheimer patients, Joan spent 12 years encouraging others to mine their creative spirit. Now she's mining her own. Retiring from community health work last July released the floodgates of creativity, allowing her the time and freedom to be more experimental in her art. The rush of ideas and new paintings has been so consistent that Joan is having a hard time keeping up.

"I am not really sure where my ideas come from; they seem to evolve out of the ether and gel into imagery in my mind, but they are informed by many things – light, shape, texture, education, other artists, music, life experiences, and so on. All of this educates and refines artistic vision but after that it is pure instinct, based on practice.

"My problem isn't lack of inspiration or ideas but too many ideas. Over the years I've learned that discipline and severe mental editing is essential for me to produce work that I am happy with. I am currently exploring new avenues of expression using elements of collage and digital imagery in conjunction with traditional oil painting techniques."

One result of her explorations is a series of "shadow" paintings. Translating digital images of shadows to canvas in layers of collage, she begins by building up the canvas surface with various materials including gesso, acrylics, coloured pencil, paint, tissue paper and gold leaf, and then completes the piece with oils.

Another product is 20 "bowl" paintings, each with a different decorative motif and an element emanating from the bowl. Bird Bowl, Bee Bowl, Rice Bowl, Thread Bowl, etc. Joan describes these works as the "juxtaposition of texture, everyday objects and images in a way that is unexpected and creates a new experience beyond the sum of the parts."

Joan spends more time than ever at her studio, located at Lonsdale and First. She will be showcasing work from the shadow series at the DisCOVERY exhibition "These Are Made for Walking", Jan 9-Feb 5 at the Seymour Art Gallery. Opening reception: January 10, 2006, 7-9 pm.

WHO: Joan Skeet

WHERE: Her studio, 604.984.8740