

Palm Desert artist captures essence of desert landscape's natural beauty

ON
ART

Jean
McKig



Dick Seymour describes his work as realism flavored with impressionism.

To Dick Seymour, rocks are the bones of the Earth, water its lifeblood and the surface of the land its skin.

Sunlight seems to caress the landscape as sensuously as it does the human form, and the Earth weathers with age just as a face wrinkles.

With his awareness, Seymour presents the commanding beauty of the desert that surrounds us. As a landscape artist, he is a master of the genre.

His range of knowledge and his intimate association with nature on its own terms establishes his credentials as an authority on his subjects.

Seymour, whose work can be seen at Gallery SoHo in Palm Desert, is a contemporary landscape artist who matured during the period of abstract expressionism.

While collecting his undergraduate and masters degree in art, he studied abstraction but became convinced early in his career that the reality of nature was in itself abstract.

He paints the desert with a keen eye for color and authenticity. From a distance, his canvases appear almost photographic, but viewed closely, the images dissolve into painterly brushwork and prove to be an illusion. Seymour chronicles a setting that is ancient, untamed and at times harshly beautiful — boulders, moun-



"Untitled": Oil and acrylic on canvas, 3 feet by 3 feet, by Dick Seymour. \$1,000.

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tains, jagged rock formations and sand.

Unforgettable moments in the desert that appear once in a lifetime are crystallized forever in his paintings.

Seymour works exclusively in mixed media — oil and acrylic on canvas. On the intellectual level, his paintings support the truisms of detail, but from the emotional point of view, they are nostalgic renderings of idealism.

He skillfully captures the essence of a scene without trite exaggeration. His work is a testimony that proclaims that nature is timeless and spiritual.

Early challenges

Seymour grew up next to an Indian reservation along the banks of the Mississippi in northern Wisconsin.

He experienced the challenges of living in the wilderness. They gave him more than a passing acquaintance with nature. Long removed from this setting, he continues to

speed ~~inside~~ each year exploring nature's wonders in one of the Western states.

The rest of the year, he is inspired by the grandeur of the mountains and desert that he views from the windows of his Palm Desert studio.

"I try to paint the desert as naturally as I can," he says. "However I also want my paintings to reflect emotion, color and light. I suppose you could say that my work is realism flavored with a drop of impressionism."

"I often send people out into the desert and tell them to really look at the colors, the many shades of green, reds, whites and browns. It is a way that they can see first hand the wonder of God's creations."

Harking back to his statement, Seymour combines the objective observation of nature with the impressionist perceptions of taste, touch, sound and smell.

The result is plain-air painting rendered in true colors enhanced by the mystery of

desert light.

"My paintings are more than landscapes. They are metaphors for self-discovery, sensuality and the human experience."

"In fact I feel that they are imagery for my ideas about what it is like to be alive on the planet."

See it yourself

Seymour's work and commissioned pieces are in homes and corporations throughout the United States and in Oslo, Norway.

He exhibits in galleries and invitational shows in California, Arizona, Nevada and Colorado. He is a frequent guest lecturer and teacher throughout Southern California.

Seymour exhibits his work in his studio on the second floor of Gallery SoHo, 41-801 Corporate Way, No. 6. Information: 836-0746.

— McKig is a freelance arts writer based in Piquet, Calif.