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VISUAL ARTS

Susan Bell, Gardner-Webb Professor Emerita of Art, Presents Gallery Show

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON OCTOBER 19, 2021



Exhibit, ‘A Retrospective: Roots and Wings and Ordinary Things,’ begins Homecoming Weekend

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Susan Bell, who retired from Gardner-Webb University and was named professor emerita of art in 2021, will present a gallery show Oct. 23-Dec. 10 in the Ali Pouryousefi Memorial Art Gallery in Tucker Student Center. The exhibit, “A Retrospective: Roots and Wings and Ordinary Things” begins Homecoming weekend. The opening reception for the show will be Oct. 24 from 1 to 3 p.m.

“I am especially hopeful that my former students will be able to come,” Bell offered. “This retrospective is in celebration of my 36 years at Gardner-Webb. “‘Ordinary Things’ expresses my approach to art, helping others to see the beauty in the people, places, shapes and colors around them. It is my hope that my faith in the Creator who makes the ordinary extraordinary will be seen in my art.”



▲ Chickadee Collage by Susan Bell, Gardner-Webb Professor Emerita of Art

Bell taught the following classes: “Art Education for the Classroom Teacher,” “Art History,” “Christianity and Art,” “Studio: Drawing, Painting, Life Drawing, and Ceramics,” and “Media: Acrylics, Pastels, Watercolor and Collage.” She won several student choice awards for her teaching. She also led extensive museum studies in 10 countries and 60 American museums and is a frequent lecturer for church, school and community groups.

“This retrospective will include my ‘Roots’ both personally and creatively,” Bell shared. “Significant family subjects are metaphors of belonging: my father’s Virginia farm, my mother’s tree drawings from college, my grandmother’s love of flowers and the sepia watercolors based on old family photographs. My ‘Wings’ include the more literal lighthearted bird collages as well as the more experimental abstract pieces.”

Reflecting on her career, Bell acknowledged the historical and contemporary artists who have influenced her. The list includes names like Michelangelo, Rembrandt, Degas, Monet, Alex Powers, Chagall, Cadillac, Jean Gasthof and many others.

“Am I a teacher who paints or an artist who teaches, for over 40 years I have enjoyed both,” she observed. “Historical and museum studies inform my work as well as yearly painting workshops. Michelangelo chose as his epitaph: ‘I am still learning.’ I love that! The students I have taught and the different subjects and mediums have encouraged me to keep learning. My studies and my teaching have motivated me to explore a variety of styles, mediums and motifs. I hope that the love and respect I have for these subjects reflects their significance. Because of the Creator, aren’t we surrounded by Extraordinary Ordinaries?”

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inspires them to make a positive and lasting difference in the lives of others. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.



When Morning Gilds the Sky, acrylic



Bountiful II, acrylic