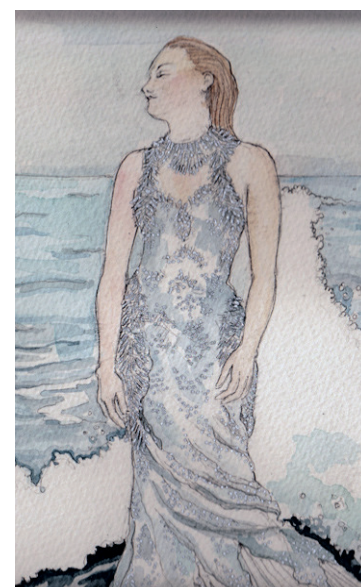


Wonderful Watercolors

SANTA BARBARA TENNIS CLUB TO SHOWCASE THE WATERCOLOR PAINTINGS OF MARIANNA VICTORIA MASHEK, A LOCAL ARTIST, IN UPCOMING EXHIBITION



COURTESY PHOTOS

By Josh Grega,
News-Press Staff Writer



Marianna Victoria Mashek, “Grace Ease and Joy”

When: Monday thru Sept. 6

Where: Santa Barbara Tennis Club,

2375 Foothill Rd., Santa Barbara

Gallery hours: 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Next week, the lobby of the Santa Barbara Tennis Club will once again be adorned with the paintings of local artist Marianna Victoria Mashek, who is opening her fourth solo art show at the club. The exhibition entitled “Grace Ease and Joy” will be part of the club’s 2nd Friday Art series and will feature 27 watercolor paintings

centered around the theme of travel, depicting locations like the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France, the Amalfi Coast of Italy, and the artist’s hometown of Santa Barbara.

Ms. Mashek’s mother and father hailed from Russia and Austria, respectively, and her previous exhibition at the tennis club centered on the theme of her Russian heritage and the country’s fairy tales.

Her most recent art show took place at Hospice of Santa Barbara, featuring works the artist described as “on grief and letting go.” She also has a similarly themed painting called “She Let Go” on display at the Ridley Tree Cancer center. Although “She Let Go” will be making an appearance in her next exhibition, Ms. Mashek’s upcoming show will by in large depict the opposite of such weighty themes.

“This show, I wanted to have a feel of travel and ease, and grace and joy,”

she said.

Ms. Mashek’s introduction to painting came through her mother, who was also an artist. At a young age, her mother taught her the “nuts and bolts” of artwork, which she expanded upon when she majored in art at UCSB. She has no shortage of artistic influences, naming Odilon Redon of France, Ivan Bilibin of Russia, Gustav Klimt of Austria, and post-impressionist painters Paul Gauguin and Vincent van Gogh among those who have influenced her work. As an artist, Ms. Mashek specializes in watercolors, which she described as having a “life of its own.” Particularly fond of its texture and pigment, Ms. Mashek told the News-Press that the difficulty of controlling watercolor often leads to “auspicious accidents” that create a “beautiful, abstract kind of feeling.”

Referring to her painting “Beautiful Sunset Venice,” which depicts a sunset on the Grand Canal of Venice, Italy,

the artist commented on how the paint traveling in different directions “creates the illusion of a really beautiful sunset.”

In addition to “Autumnal Sunset,” the “Grace Ease and Joy” exhibition will include pieces inspired by her recent travels in Paris, France such as “Eiffel Tower at Night” and “Poised For Courage,” depicting a woman standing in front of a stone Pegasus statue.

“Breaking Away,” her Facebook profile picture and a piece she referred to as her “logo,” will also make an appearance. Showing a woman standing on the beach as a wave breaks behind her, “Breaking Away” is a play on words that parallels the woman’s state with the ocean.

“She’s having an emotional release, she’s breaking free,” Ms. Mashek said.

One look at the albums on Ms. Mashek’s personal website shows “Breaking Away” is just one of many paintings of hers to feature the ocean.

As she spoke to the News-Press she quipped of her work, “A lot of mermaids, a lot of romance.” This recurring image is most likely due to her upbringing in Santa Barbara.

“I think because I grew up in Santa Barbara the ocean is a very big part of my life,” she said.

When asked what she wants attendees to take away from “Grace Ease and Joy,” Ms. Mashek expressed hope that her work will “touch, move, and inspire people to delight in beauty, freedom, and the fulfillment of their own dreams.” The exhibition opens at the Santa Barbara Tennis Club on July 8 and will run until September 6, with a special reception on July 12 from 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., during which members of the public will have the opportunity to meet Ms. Mashek.

The tennis club is located at 2375 Foothill Rd. in Santa Barbara, with gallery hours between 10 a.m. and 9 p.m.