

Adele Campbell shows dozens of works by 15 painters and sculptors

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waterscape Painter Peter Wyse paints joyful, whimsical subjects. This is his "I'll Go First," acrylic on birch, part of The Art of Winter at the Adele Campbell Gallery. photo submitted

The Art of Winter annual show has been going strong at the Adele Campbell Gallery for 23 years.

Owner Liz Harris says the group exhibition – which takes place in the gallery – is a great way for them to show the latest works of signature artists.

"There are usually around 15 artists in the show, with 10 sending a large body of work. It's a big show," she says. The Art of Winter is a theme and many pieces pay homage to the season. "It always coincides with the opening of Whistler Blackcomb, so it's a celebration of winter ahead. It's a way for us to toast our artists, too, and thank them," says Harris.

"It's fun because there are many different styles, many different types of artists. There is something for everyone."

Harris says the paintings range from common Whistler themes of skiing and outdoor life, to landscapes and abstracts. There are a few sculptors, too, she adds.

Birgit Piskor is a contemporary, Victoria-based sculptor who works in concrete.

Contacted while on holiday in Baja California, she says an encounter with a whale while she was kayaking in Mexico changed her life. The mighty marine mammal breached while she was close and destroyed her kayak, injuring her and leading to a long swim to shore. This close brush with death inspired her to follow her dream.

Her sculptures are big, not whale-like perhaps, but some are several metres high.

"I'd like to go bigger, but I'm limited by the height of my studio and the fact that I don't weld yet," Piskor says.

"I work with concrete, but I don't actually do any carvings. Each piece is hand built, I mix small batches of really modified concrete and built it up in layers."

North Vancouver painter Dana Irving does landscapes of swooping trees, clouds and mountains and has been described as Emily Carr meets Dr. Seuss.

"They are definitely West Coast," she laughs.

"Style wise I am so influenced by Lawren Harris and Emily Carr. It's lighter humoured but I think we have the same reverence."

Many pieces are of familiar scenes around West Vancouver and Howe Sound.

"I am really passionate about the Canadian landscape. I grew up in Prince George and the north gets dismissed as a place... and it is simply beautiful," Irving says.

"There's the northern lights and moments when the air is crystalline and frozen. I feel like it's our little Canadian secret and I hope that comes out in the work."

Abbotsford-based painter Peter Wyse likens what he does to "painting happiness."

His work is whimsical figures on ski hills or playing hockey; one rides a polar bear.

"My mother-in-law likes to say I paint joy. I like that description," he laughs.

"I walk into the studio and it's my happy place. I strive for a kinder world. It's not like I don't have angst in my life or have been through hard times, it is a personal choice."

Art of Winter runs Nov. 28 to Jan. 15.