Jan Crawford, AFCA

Biography

Jan Crawford was born in Vancouver but raised in Penticton in an orchard setting. She holds a B.ED art major from the University of BC, a printmaking major from Emily Carr University and AFCA Signature Status with the Federation of Canadian Artists. Jan spent twenty years at Malaspina as a printmaker, where she produced over 140 large, colourful water-based monotypes. Many of these prints are in galleries, wineries and private homes. A series of six large monotypes are a part of the Kelowna Art Gallery's private collection. These prints were published in a book 'Nexus: Histories and Communities'. Today Jan works in acrylic. Her recent work focuses on preserves giving attention to the iconic jars of the Okanagan. Crawford's work can be seen in Kelowna, Penticton, Calgary, the Vancouver International Airport, the Lakeside Resort and Okanagan wineries. Jan has shown her work in municipal as well as private galleries. Recently Crawford's work was featured in Galleries West Magazine (Summer Addition 2016) under "Artists to Collect".

Artist Statement

This painting celebrates a golden time in the Okanagan when fruit production was the central focus in economic sustainability. This painting began from a photograph I took in late July of sour cherry jelly. This jelly has been a huge part of my childhood; both pie and jelly were mainstream within the calendar year. There was always a jar of sour cherry jelly on the top shelf of our fridge. This archival fruit is slowly disappearing however and with it, its unique flavour and colour.

The light is so critical in communicating the atmosphere I want. The sun is about to set and at that time, a warm golden light shines through the back of the jars. The effect is a translucent colour which highlights subtle details of the jelly. The half-used jar suggests jelly blobs are so sticky that they cling to the edge of the jar. This creates a random pattern of shape and colour which adds to the visual composition of the painting.

The light bursting through the jar on the right makes it the focal point of the piece. I spent hours developing this section because I wanted the viewer to be captured by the light. My intention here was for the viewer to ask; "why does the artist want me to be captured by this jar of jelly?" While thinking this the viewer's eye is gently pulled left, where they then notice the jar with 'Kerr and Mason' embossed on it: These words echo the preserving of fruit and jelly in the Okanagan. I use glazing techniques in order to capture the way in which light comes through the jelly. Layers and layers of acrylic were added until I achieved a translucent effect. These jars of fruit and jam are now iconic symbols which represent the heyday of the agriculture in the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia. I intend for the viewer to be reminded of our shared historical cultural identities, and the role they play in shaping our cultural values today.

Orchard House Jellies
Acrylic, 30" x 40"