

# Art show branches out

By Carol Stuart Sep 9, 2004



First place winner of the Denham Springs Fine Art Association fall all-member show was "Mullet Creek," an oil by Lionel Kabel.

"Trees" are the theme of the Denham Springs Fine Art Association all-member show hanging at the Livingston Parish Library in Livingston this month after an August stay at the

Hummell Street Gallery in Denham Springs.

When you say "tree" in Livingston Parish, the first examples that leap to many minds are the many ancient oaks that dot the landscape. This seems to hold true for artists as well. At least 12 of the 31 paintings in the DSFAA show are widely varying interpretations of that spectacular species.

"Mullet Creek," Lionel Kabel's large first-place oil, is a detailed realistic depiction of a live oak beside a marina; and the second-place pastel by Darryl Alello, "The Stories I Could Tell," portrays another ancient oak in an economical, but realistic, style.

Lynne Jones' oil highlights in bright rose against a green background a luxuriant "Red Oak at Hunstock Road," in contrast to Elizabeth Thompson's mixed media "Oak," a stunted growth on the water's edge. Oaks also become a child's joy in Mary Head's acrylic of an ancient oak in "Southern Legacy."

Three paintings from Marita Gentry's current group of stylized oaks are also on display: "Reaching for Tomorrow," "Legacy of Color" and "Evening Influence." In "Twilight Stretch" by Jennifer Guitreau, the oaks are a smoky blue and green, as are the grasses that enclose a white path in the moonlight.

James Ray Smith's oak "Tree" is a detailed pencil sketch, depicting, oddly, trunk and branches, but no root system. Several oaks also inhabit his primitive acrylic landscape of "Little Creek." Elizabeth Thompson's second entry, "Spring Walk," has a similar feel, but holds closely gathered, unrecognizable trees.

We're not certain if the illuminated storybook illustration, "Haunted," by Chris Avant is an oak, but it certainly could be. And the only fabric art in the show is "Mother Oak," by Janis Mann. Even Leni Pierce's leaf collages "Collard Leaf Trees" and "Tranquil Trees Wallpaper" suggest oak trees.

The yellow-ribbon decked tree in Pierce's watercolor "Coming Home" is unidentifiable, and the species is also uncertain in "Waiting for the Kids" a jewel-bright watercolor showing a delicately detailed lightly leafed tree complete with tree house.

The red and yellow of Bonnie Smith-Williams' "Can't See the Forest for the Trees," are equally cheerful and the five panel work is an impressive presence, but her two misty watercolors are even more memorable: woods interiors, each with a dominant color, "Even Trees Get the Blues," and "Hint of Yellow Spring Coming."

Third place and honorable mention prizes were bestowed on other impressionistic works: Lydia Wheeler's third place "Sunset Glow," strokes a woods with typical sunset colors, accented in bright blue; and "West Palms," which received an honorable mention, is one of two Tammy Keene oil and gouache palm trees.

Freddie Tisdale's acrylic "The Symphonies of Summer" is the only other palm tree, a sultry close up view of palm fronds, complete with small inhabitants.

Keene's acrylic, "North Cross Lake," an economical oil which brought her another honorable mention and Tom Wallace's oil "Ora Grande National Forest," are the only pines in the show, and though they are very different in style, interestingly, they evoke the same feeling of solitude.

Wallace takes that chill feeling a step further in the leafless, gray "Tree," an oil for which he won a Special Award. Stark subjects also inhabit Mike Avant's evocative, vertically symmetrical acrylic "Tree-Tree"; Freddy Tisdale's oil of a fallen branch, "Path of the Storm"; and Ann Warmber's "Beach Tree," a horizontal watercolor of a dark windtorn tree against a pale cream and blue sand and sky. Elaine Doolittle's watercolor, "Beginnings" is also sparse and barren, but translucent greens accompany the gray, offering hope.

There are, surprisingly, only two Louisiana bayou scenes in the show, Susan Bethune's photo, "Serene Bayou," and Nelly Franklin's mixed media, "Life Goes On." Cypress of another kind is featured in "Monterrey Cypress," an acrylic by Betty Core.

The show will remain at the Livingston Library throughout September.