

Student Artists at Work

Thursday, January 17, 2013



Soccer Recruit Finds Joy in the Stillness of a Studio

For the next three weeks, we'll feature the work of a student artist. Each has been developing a personal vision. We'll learn about their journeys and take a look at what they've been creating.

Elizabeth Curry

In the drawing studio, Elizabeth Curry moves quickly, placing several charcoal drawings, two paintings, and some ceramic pieces in a wide arc. After a fussy glance or two, she rearranges the paintings.

Curry was recruited by UNH to play soccer and came here in 2008 from Bremerton, Washington. New Hampshire wasn't exactly on her radar, but she immediately felt at home, especially in Portsmouth, a seaside town with houses clustered along the shore.

Initially, her major was environmental conservation, but after a year, she returned to Washington where she studied at a nearby university. She returned to UNH in the spring of 2011, ready to play soccer and discover her academic path. She took history, business, and anthropology courses. Through an interest in photography, she began to explore the art and art history department. When she discovered painting, her whole landscape changed—she engaged with it as an artist.

“Sports and art are actually alike in that both require a lot of focus,” says Curry. “You have to be visually attuned and you read spaces in an abstract way.”

As a center back on her soccer team, Curry not only had to respond quickly on defense, she had to translate her response into an offensive move. It's the kind of fluid, complicated problem solving that Curry enjoys.

Perhaps her biggest challenge as a painter is to slow down. “I love to finish things,” says Curry. “I'm getting more expressive, and I am working on the whole canvas longer.”

Additionally, her colors have become more refined and personal. “My clothes reflect my palette,” she says with a laugh. “I actually have a coral coat.”

One of her favorite paintings is of the old power plant near the field house. She has simplified the structure, but the worn brick color is rich and textured.

“I was painting there one day and a workman asked if I wanted to see the inside,” recalls Curry. “I immediately called everyone, because we've all been so intrigued by the building. It's really cool inside with all this equipment and a big power board from the fifties. Those big shapes really appeal to me.”



UNTITLED (POWER PLANT), OIL ON CANVAS

In a painting that's still in progress, Curry has been revising slowly. The palette is definitely her own and, as she puts it, “Those colors feel like home to me.”

“I like painting, most of the time,” says Curry. “But it’s not just standing out in the sun having a good time. Trying to explain my work is really hard. As Edward Hopper said, ‘If I could say it in words, there’d be no reason to paint.’”

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