

Jones' take on trade routes opens Lorenzo series

RYAN MELANSON | Telegraph-Journal
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Lachlan Grant, left, and Matt Cole check out a piece by local artist Sarah Jones, depicting the Saint John Harbour. Jones is currently being show cased as part of the 2013-2014 Lorenzo Art Series at the University of New Brunswick Saint John.

Photo: Ryan Melanson/Telegraph-Journal.

SAINT JOHN – Cathie Hurley thinks that Saint John's artistic side doesn't necessarily have to be thought of as completely separate from the city's large industrial presence.

"Saint John has quite a history of art and culture in the city, but we're always sort of branded as if our blue-collar people don't appreciate the arts," said Hurley, the chair of the University of New Brunswick Saint John's Lorenzo Society.

Sunday's opening of the 2013-2014 Lorenzo Art Series, however, did its best to create a marriage of the two.

Featured was a new collection by Sarah Jones, local painter and recent Saint John Board of Trade Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award.

Titled "Trade Route", each scene on the wall of UNBSJ's Ward Chipman Art Gallery presents a different take on the industrial movements in and out of the Saint John Harbour or Courtenay Bay.

"I really like the points in the city where things are always moving, coming and going. I love the cranes in the harbour, the boats coming in, unloading their cargo. It's this amazing focal point where things come from all over the world right there, and we watch it every day."

Hurley said the subject matter, Jones' recent award win and the fact she's an alumni of the university made her extremely excited to feature the artist in the series for the first time.

"It's so appropriate and very special for us," she said.

The scenes aren't an entirely new foray for Jones, who's known for her works of art depicting the streets and landscapes of the Port City, but she said it was a newer opportunity to focus an entire show, specifically for the Lorenzo series, on the waterfront scenes.

"I just love that industrial stuff, and there's an endless supply here, but I want to make sure I'm always looking at it in a fresh way."

Through her recent win at the Board of Trade awards, Jones also matched up with another winner, the university's Promise Partnership, which provides support and programs for students of Hazen White-St. Francis School in Crescent Valley.

The partnership took home the Big Heart Award, and on the evening of the gala, set up a date with Jones to work with Grade 8 students in an art workshop before the opening of her show on Sunday.

The goal, said Lorenzo Art Series director Stacey Cool was, "To hopefully open their eyes up to art a little bit more," she said.

"We were doing experimental stuff, speed drawing, not looking at the page, just fun stuff to try to keep them from being so intimidated by their minds and structures I guess," Jones said.

Jones' series will be on display in the gallery until Dec.13, and society members are still deciding among applications submitted for the rest of the series, based on merit, innovation and conceptual content.

The series is meant to also provide a venue for emerging local artists, and Hurley said further showcases will likely reflect that. As with all Lorenzo events, the Art Series exhibitions are always

free of charge.

“It’s always been to provide an opportunity for us to really have an arts and cultural arm here, not just at the university, but in the community itself as well, and to have everything as accessible as possible,” Hurley said.

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