

"It's All About Colour - or the Chicken - or the Pear"

"Recently I started reviewing why I like some paintings and not others. The same question I asked myself about my painting subject. Why and how do I choose what to paint? I always thought it was contrast, light and dark, but it turned out to be incorrect. What I truly like is colour and shape.

Every artist is evolving during their artistic career and knowing what attracts you to a painting and why brings you a big step forward. It sounds simple, but for an artist it can be a long journey with many paintings and mistakes involved.

Changing colour takes courage. As a painter from real life (vs. a photo) I always tried to mix colours to match what I see. Changing your painting to what you want to see is different and for me it was a slow approach like a metamorphosis, layer by layer. This means, that the paintings you see in this exhibition all looked differently at the beginning and slowly I adjusted the colours to the way I liked them.

Looking at the colours of the paintings in this exhibition I can tell that I like happy and warm colours. I knew that the colour change was complete when I liked looking at the painting, when I had the "Yes! This is it!" feeling and I really enjoyed the presence of the painting in my studio.

All of these paintings are done mainly with the palette knife. I enjoy the texture the palette knife creates and the fact that it is hard to paint the subject in a perfect way. In fact knowing about the imperfection gives me a huge amount of freedom and joy while painting.

Painting for me is about happiness and why not be a bit silly at the same time? This is where the rooster paintings come in. It started with *Mr. Rooster*, my neighbour's metal chicken. In the painting he became such a character that I had to continue with different other paintings and already I have more paintings in mind."

Nicole Russell is an accomplished watercolour and oil artist who lived for several years on a sailboat, sailing from the Chesapeake Bay, USA, to the Mediterranean and then to New Zealand. Her studio is now in Richmond, Nelson. Nicole's paintings show strong colour and contrast. Her passion is painting from life (plein air) and alla prima (wet-on-wet/finishing the painting in one go). She teaches "Painting for all Levels" at Waimea College and offers watercolour classes at her studio.

***Meet the Artist at the Opening Celebration
18 February 2019
5:30 PM - 7 PM***

