

TRADITIONAL AND CONTEMPORARY

Two Maryland Galleries To Feature

TEXT Rosemary Knower,

One of the things most people love about going abroad is the opportunity to stroll through galleries offering original prints and paintings by Rembrandt, Picasso, and Matisse, afterwards sipping a leisurely cappuccino, and opting for French, Spanish, or Indian cuisine at one of the cosmopolitan cafes that line the street. Ever wish you didn't have to go to Paris to do that? Tom Akins, the owner of the Margaret Smith Gallery, has arranged it for you. Akins has just opened a new branch of the gallery in Bethesda, Maryland, where you can find original prints by both contemporary and traditional masters of lithograph and etching, original oil paintings, and the decidedly American art of the film cel.

Akins took over the Margaret Smith Gallery at its original location in Ellicott City a year ago, and has recently opened the Bethesda gallery. "It's a destination area for a lively city community," says Akins, "an atmosphere where our extensive, diverse collection appeals to our diverse clientele. We have people who come in looking for things like the Pissarro paintings from the family estate, people who want contemporary artists' works, and people who are looking for originals by Dr. Seuss and Chuck Jones."

Chuck Jones, the man who drew Bugs Bunny and elevated cartoon art to the level of cerebral humor, is the subject of a retrospective coming up at the gallery November 1st through 3rd. Akins, whose enthusiasm and verve make clear why people like to visit the gallery, discusses the list of special events coming up this fall with the contagious joy of a host who loves to

plan delightful surprises for his guests. "We're very excited about our upcoming show of Jane Seymour's paintings," he says. Seymour's "Journey To Impressionism" show, at the gallery from September 20th to 22nd, will include oils, watercolors and limited edition prints.

"The hardest thing for me is to sell my work," says Seymour. "When I look at one of my paintings, I don't just see the image; I see the day I made it, the thing that surprised me, the memory.... but I get excited when people say, 'I must have this, it reminds me of my daughter, or my son; it has all the colors we love; we must have it for the bedroom, the dining room.' I feel a little piece of me is in their home, and that's a very personal thing." Seymour will be present at the opening of the show. A noted humanitarian, she will also be serving that



ABOVE: "Le Grand Hotel de la Plage," 24" x 25," by H. Claude Pissarro, grandson of Camille Pissarro, circa 1999, is featured at Margaret Smith Gallery.

weekend as Master of Ceremonies at Howard Community College's Grand Prix, a glittering dressage exhibit that will benefit the college. Seymour's watercolors, prints, and oils, many of which offer an intimate view of English gardens and idyllic scenes which transcend time, can be previewed on the Gallery website (www.margaretsmithgallery.com)

Akins has designed a detailed website where you can check dates and opening times, download invitations to special events, and view selections from both the collection and the current offerings. This fall, both galleries will be involved in special shows of Vintage Posters, "mini-seminar" weekends on Dr. Seuss (whose original, rare collaborative proofs will be the centerpiece of the weekend) and Chuck Jones, whose delightful original drawings will be displayed

PIECES IN A EUROPEAN AMBIANCE

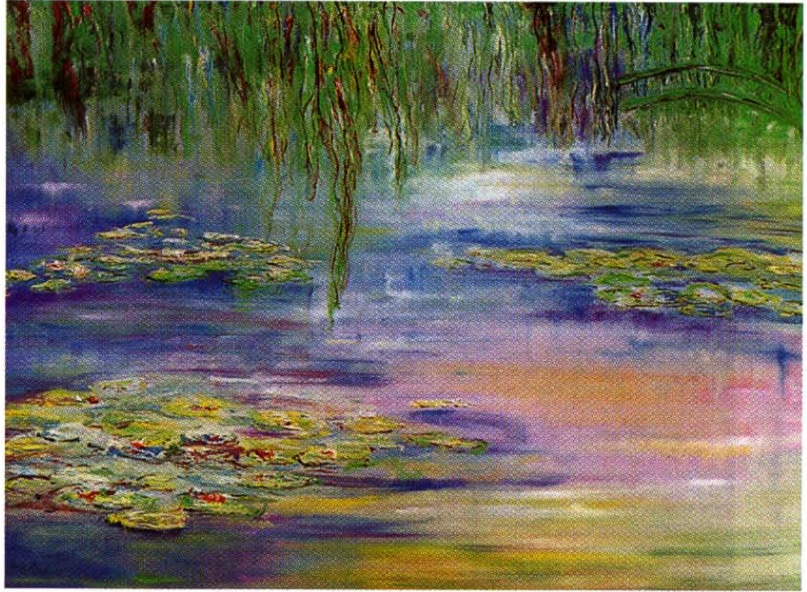
Jane Seymour's *"Journey To Impressionism"*

Upper Marlboro, MD

along with his actual cartoons showing on six screens set up in the Bethesda space.

Akins' own collection began with the Old Masters, but his galleries regularly show contemporary artists, both American and International. While galleries on the New York scene tend to have a rather narrow focus, Akins insists that Margaret Smith Galleries show work in a variety of styles and price ranges, from the "initial investment" level up to rare pieces that command six figures. "People are spending more time at home these days," Akins points out. "They want to invest in something that will enhance the quality of their lives. I'm constantly thinking, how can we re-arrange the collection to show it off? What can I find for that client? It's twenty-four hours a day, but when you're doing something you love, that makes it all worthwhile."

For more information on the Jane Seymour Show and other special events, call the gallery at 301-657-1200 (Bethesda) or 410-461-7740 (Ellicott City).



ABOVE: "Dreams of Giverny," 30" x 40," is among the paintings in Jane Seymour's "Journey To Impressionism" collection that will be showing at the Margaret Smith Galleries in September.



ABOVE: Jane Seymour's "Johnny Easter Eggs," 14" x 18."

LEFT: "Flowers In A Clear Vase," 21" x 15," is a study of the art of ikebana.